Catholicism and the Bible in *Al filo del agua* and *Las tierras flacas* by Agustín Yáñez

By

DONALD WILLIAM DAVEY

A DISSERTATION PRESENTED TO THE GRADUATE COUNCIL OF THE UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA

1974

Copyright by
Donald William Davey
1974

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to sincerely thank the members of my committee, Dr. I. R. Wershow, Dr. J. J. Allen, and Dr. Alfred Hower, for the many hours they have devoted to reading this dissertation, and for their valuable suggestions. I am also very grateful to Father Michael Gannon for his time and for setting me straight regarding a few minor points of Catholic doctrine.

Special thanks must go to my major professor, Dr. Wershow, who has always amazed me with his sensitivity to students' problems, and whose patience must surely be limitless. For the doubting Thomases, I concede that Dr. Wershow's patience must be observed over a long period of time to be truly believed.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS..... iii

ABSTRACT..... v

CHAPTERS:

I. INTRODUCTION..... 1

NOTES TO CHAPTER I..... 9

II. AGUSTIN YAÑEZ AND THE CONTEMPORY NOVEL IN SPANISH AMERICA..... 10

NOTES TO CHAPTER II..... 31

III. ELEMENTS OF CATHOLICISM AS REFLECTED IN AL FILO DEL AGUA AND LAS TIERRAS FLACAS..... 33

NOTES TO CHAPTER III..... 131

IV. THE BIBLE IN AL FILO DEL AGUA AND LAS TIERRAS FLACAS..... 134

NOTES TO CHAPTER IV..... 198

V. CONCLUSION..... 199

BIBLIOGRAPHY..... 203

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH..... 212

Abstract of Dissertation Presented to the
Graduate Council of the University of Florida in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

CATHOLICISM AND THE BIBLE IN AL FILO DEL AGUA AND LAS TIERRAS FLACAS BY AGUSTIN YAÑEZ

By

Donald William Davey

June, 1974

Chairman: Professor Irving R. Wershow
Major Department: Romance Languages and Literatures (Spanish)

The purpose of this dissertation is to examine the role of Catholicism and the Bible in two novels of Agustín Yáñez: Al filo del agua and Las tierras flacas.

The first chapter outlines the basic divisions of the text, discusses criticism done on religion and the Bible in literature, lists the dissertations written on Agustín Yáñez and discusses the content of one of these, and briefly outlines two articles on Al filo del agua which deal with religion.

The second chapter begins by tracing the evolution of the Spanish American novel. It is seen that until roughly 1940, this genre dealt almost exclusively with Spanish American themes,

resulting in several national or regional literatures. However, in recent years it has acquired more universal appeal through emphasis on psychological processes and the mental and spiritual crises of twentiety-century man, as well as through use of new literary techniques. It is shown that Agustin Yáñez, through Al filo del agua, played a primary role in this change. The last part of the chapter includes biographical data on Yanez, discussion of his literary career and theories, and a brief summary of the high points of the two novels to be studied.

Chapter III deals with the elements of Catholicism as reflected in the two novels, specifically discussing the creation of a religious atmosphere, and the functions of various elements of Church liturgy: the Mass, special rituals, the Blessed Mother, the Devil, Christ-like figures, angels and saints, prayers, Church traditions and ideas, and misconceptions and distortions of Catholic dogma. The atmosphere of Al filo del agua, established totally in its first chapter, is primarily liturgical and is dominated by scrupulosity, with emphasis on the sixth commandment. Consistently emphasized are the sorrowful and fearsome aspects of Church liturgy, and there is repression in the village. It becomes evident from the religious extremism of the villagers that the Catholicism of Al filo del agua is not orthodox, but bizarrely distorted. Yáñez' criticism of the village atmosphere is not outwardly hostile; rather, he subtly utilizes Church liturgy and dogma to undermine some of the villagers' traditional religious concepts. The nuances of the liturgy afford the reader various insights into the novel's characters and situations, with the result that the final arrival of the troops seems inevitable.

The liturgical element of the atmosphere of Las tierras flacas is established gradually, and is dominated by superstition. However, in this case the reader can more readily pardon the characters' religious misconceptions, because they are due to an irremediable ignorance, not a calculated distortion, of Catholicism. In this atmosphere, progress is established as the enemy of religion, and particularly of prayer. Also evident to a degree is a secularization of certain elements of the Catholic faith.

Chapter IV discusses the Bible in the novels with regard to Biblical atmosphere, name symbolism, themes, and other Biblical references. The atmosphere of Las tierras flacas is primarily Biblical and is essential to the novel's purpose. In Al filo del agua name symbolism is mainly a means of characterization, but in Las tierras flacas it is also prophetic and occasionally achieves ironic effects. The Biblical themes most emphasized in Al filo del agua are punishment from God, the Prodigal Son, prophecies, and the number seven; those most dominant in Las tierras flacas are idol worship, punishment from God, patriarchal and prophetic figures, Cain and Abel, and the Prodigal Son. Other Biblical references in the two novels serve multiple purposes.

Chapter V briefly reexamines each novel separately in a final attempt to place in perspective the main points developed in the preceding chapters.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this dissertation is to examine the role and the influence, direct and indirect, of Catholicism and the Bible in two novels of Agustín Yáñez. In dealing with these elements as reflected in Al filo del agua and Las tierras flacas, an attempt will be made first to analyze the author's creation of a religious atmosphere as a basic, underlying factor in the novels, and its significance in their development. Then the elements of the Church liturgy as seen therein will be examined point by point: the Mass, processions, Holy Week, the sacraments, the Blessed Virgin, the Devil, Christ-like figures, the angels, the saints, prayers, Church traditions, and articles of faith. As for the Bible, space will be devoted to Biblical atmosphere, name symbolism, Biblical themes, and explicit and implicit references in the text to Biblical stories and books. Subtle, indirect references to the Bible will be discussed as they appear, both in the narration of Yáñez, and in the dialogue or interior monologue of the characters. These discussions will not be merely numerical compilations of liturgical and Biblical references, but an analysis of their significance and effect.

The selection of Yáñez as a subject for study is the result of a combination of interests. First, there is the interest in the

Catholic faith and the many and diverse elements that comprise it, including the liturgy, articles of faith, dogma, Sacred Scripture and Tradition. An attempt will always be made here to present the elements and views of the Church as fairly and accurately as possible. Second, there is the interest in a modern author who is dealing with twentieth century Latin American themes, in this case pertaining basically to Mexico. The Spanish American novel in recent years has grown considerably in stature, and much literary criticism has been directed toward its social aspects and implications. On the other hand, very little has been written about it from the religious point of view, considering the prominence of religion in the structure of Latin American society.

Much criticism has been done in general on religion and the Bible in literature, including works written in Spanish. More works of a religious nature have been written in previous centuries than in this present one, and therefore the bulk of the commentary involving considerations of religion pertains to these works. A typical example of a religion-oriented writer in English literature is John Milton (1608-74). His famous epics Paradise Lost and Paradise Regained have prompted such critical works in our time as The Bible in Milton's Epics, by James H. Sims.[1] Commentary pertaining to religion also has its place in literary criticism of a wide range of English language authors, among them Hawthorne, Joyce, Blake, Poe, Edwin Arlington Robinson and Sinclair Lewis.

In Spanish literature there are a host of religion-oriented writers dating from the first Spanish poet known by name, Gonzalo

de Berceo (1197?-1264?), a monk whose production deals with the miracles of Our Lady and the lives of the saints. The drama, which no doubt originated as a genre from the Church, and later from the Church courtyard, reached its peak in Spain during the Golden Age (roughly the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries). In this period many prominent dramatists participated in the production of the autos sacramentales: short Eucharistic plays, usually of one act, which treat of the miracle of Transubstantiation in one way or another. The leading exponent of the autos sacramentales was Pedro Calderón de la Barca (1600-1681), himself a priest. According to Alfonso Rangel Guerra, Yáñez as a young adult "agotó la obra de Calderón, especialmente los Autos Sacramentales . . ."[2]

In the novel, mention should first be made of Spain's greatest fictional work, Don Quijote de la Mancha (1605-1615) by Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra (1547-1616). This work, of course, contains a great variety of elements, and even though religion and the Bible are not the most prominent among them, a number of critical works have been written on these subjects. Two contemporary examples are O. C. Goodwin's "The Church, the Clergy and the Bible in Don Quijote de la Mancha,"[3] and Juan Antonio Monroy's La Biblia en el "Quijote."[4] In the latter work the author speaks about the life and background of Cervantes, and points out how his knowledge of the Bible is reflected indirectly in his work. The same might be said of Agustín Yáñez: that in his works, whether it be consciously or unconsciously, his religious background and study are reflected. His direct references to

things religious and Biblical have a definite purpose in the development of the two works, and give them a special quality they otherwise would not have. His indirect references lend a subtle quality to the works which give them a religious atmosphere, and contribute toward making them truly "Jaliscan" without compromising their value to the reader who is not a native of the state of Jalisco. The Jaliscan, perhaps more than other Mexicans, is a religious individual. Yáñez loves Jalisco, and it is when his novels take place there (Al filo del agua, La tierra pródiga, Las tierras flacas) that the essence of his message is best transmitted to the reader.

Nowadays, there are very few books of criticism of general religious scope such as The Prophetic Voice in Modern Fiction, by William Randolph Mueller.[5] More specifically, in 1951 Mary E. Stephenson wrote on The Treatment of Religion in Contemporary Spanish American Fiction,[6] but two things are to be noted here: first, the fact that the entire realm of Spanish American fiction was embraced by this dissertation indicates the lack of emphasis on religion by the authors in general. Second, two decades have passed since its writing, in which many more works of fiction have been created. Among the novels of Agustín Yáñez which are highly esteemed and unanimously regarded as novels, only Al filo del agua (1947) was written before this time. Therefore much remains to be said on this particular author in this particular area.

As of this writing the interest of American scholars in Latin American literature is obviously on the increase. This is

evident from the large number of dissertations completed in the last five or six years on Latin American subjects. As a parallel to this increased general interest, Agustín Yáñez has been the subject of much critical interest during the sixties, including a number of finished and unfinished dissertations. Before the sixties he was not the subject of dissertations because there is a twelve year gap between the writing of Al filo del agua (1947) and Yáñez' next novel La creación (1959), during which time Yáñez turned to other matters such as politics (he was governor of the state of Jalisco from 1953 to 1959). However, from 1963 to the present he has been the subject of the following dissertations:

Clark, Stella T. El estilo y sus efectos en la prosa de Agustín Yáñez. Kansas; J. Brushwood, 1971.

Evans, Gilbert. El mundo novelístico de Agustín Yáñez. Yale; J. Arrom, 1966.

Flasher, John. Contemporary Mexico in the Works of Agustín Yáñez: An Interpretative Analysis. Rutgers: J. Vázquez Amaral, 1968.

Graham, Barbara. Social and stylistic realities in the fiction of Agustín Yáñez. Miami: K. Schwartz, 1969.

Haddad, Elaine. Agustín Yáñez: From Intuition to Intellectualism. Wisconsin: E. Neale Silva, 1963.

Luna, Norman. In the Land of Xipe Totec. A Comparative Study of the Experimental Novels of Agustín Yáñez, Carlos Fuentes, and Juan Rulfo. Colorado: W. J. Grupp, 1969.

Walker, John L. El tiempo en las novelas de Agustín Yáñez. California, Los Angeles: J. A. Crow, 1969.

In addition to these completed dissertations, other uncompleted ones are currently in progress:

Romero, Zoila. "La narrativa de Agustín Yáñez." Nebraska: R. Esquenazi-Mayo.

Walker, William. "A Study of the Women in the Novels of Agustín Yáñez." St. Louis: R. R. Mazza.

Any lengthy study of Yáñez dealing with Al filo del agua and Las tierras flacas must necessarily touch on religion, since religion plays such an important role in both novels. However, no dissertation has as yet concentrated exclusively on the subject; those dissertations of a general nature deal with many other aspects of the novels. An example of this is John Flasher's work Contemporary Mexico in the Novels of Agustín Yáñez: An Interpretative Analysis. The title indicates the broad nature of this undertaking, in which the author deals with reflections of contemporary Mexican society, daily life, politics, government, etc. The introduction treats in great detail Yáñez' relationship with Bandera de Provincias, a short-lived literary periodical of 1929-30 which featured articles, translations and commentary by and about authors and intellectuals from Mexico and other countries. Although the periodical was a financial failure, it did provide a young Agustín Yáñez with journalistic and editorial experience which was to benefit him in later years.

After the introduction Flasher, in his second chapter, examines each of the five novels individually: Al filo del agua, La creación, Ojerosa y pintada (1960), La tierra pródiga (1960), and Las tierras flacas (1962). It is in the discussion especially of this first novel that commentary on religion becomes unavoidable. In addition

to a handful of passing comments touching on Catholic beliefs, Flasher feels compelled to plunge into more detailed discussions of the nature of the sacrament of Penance, and an excellent analysis and research on the nature and origin of the spiritual exercises which form a full chapter of the novel. However, there is room in another study for a more in-depth discussion of Church rituals, traditions and dogma, in addition to certain Biblical parallels evident in the work.

After his individual analyses of the novels, Flasher discusses a wide range of topics pertinent to Yáñez' literary art. These include technique, creative process, imagery, the contrapuntal theme, characters, the proverb, especially as evidenced in Las tierras flacas, and point of view. In this dissertation these proverbs will be considered in relation to the Biblical atmosphere of Las tierras flacas.

Among the numerous articles of criticism that deal with Yáñez are, again, many that make mention of a Biblical allusion or of a point dealing with religion, but rarely are these more than incidental comments. An exception is an article by Martha Díaz de León.[7] It discusses the style of the Acto Preparatorio as having a Lenten quality; the affinity of Marta and María with their Biblical counterparts of the same name, the priest don Dionisio's affinity with Christ, and Gabriel's resemblance to the archangel of the same name; and it classifies the style employed by Yáñez as having the quality of a religious litany.

One article which treats entirely of a matter solely religious is written by Ramona Lagos.[8] It discusses temptation and penitence,

and the role of the confessional in the lives of the pastor and the people of the town, in addition to discussing topics treated in the Díaz de León article. The points mentioned in these and other articles will be examined later in greater detail.

In summary, this dissertation will attempt to elaborate in greater detail on certain observations mentioned in passing by various critics, and hopefully will offer a number of new insights as well. Its objective is to present a thorough study of Catholicism and the Bible in Al filo del agua and Las tierras flacas, thereby supplying valid commentary which has not been offered up to this point.

NOTES

[1]James H. Sims, The Bible in Milton's Epics (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1962).

[2]Alfonso Rangel Guerra, Agustín Yáñez: un mexicano y su obra (Mexico: Empresas Editoriales, 1969), p. 130.

[3]O. C. Goodwin, "The Church, the Clergy and the Bible in Don Quijote de la Mancha", unpubl. thesis (Gainesville: University of Florida, 1955).

[4]Juan Antonio Monroy, La Biblia en el "Quijote" (Madrid: Editorial V. Suárez, 1963).

[5]William Randolph Mueller, The Prophetic Voice in Modern Fiction (New York: Association Press, 1959).

[6]Mary E. Stephenson, The Treatment of Religion in Contemporary Spanish-American Fiction, Diss. University of Chicago, 1951.

[7]Martha Díaz de León, "Los personajes en la estructura de Al filo del agua," La Palabra y el Hombre, 43 (July-September, 1967), pp. 457-473.

[8]Ramona Lagos B., "Tentación y penitencia en Al filo del agua de Agustín Yáñez," Atenea, 45, No. 166, 105-121.

CHAPTER II

AGUSTIN YAÑEZ AND THE CONTEMPORARY NOVEL IN SPANISH AMERICA

The Spanish American novel has evolved, through the efforts of a number of exceptionally talented writers, from a literary genre relegated to secondary importance to the most important literary force in Latin America and perhaps in all of the Spanish-speaking world. Orlando Gómez-Gil has stated that:

> Durante el siglo XX la narrativa hispanoamericana llega a su culminación sobrepasando a otros géneros literarios, como el ensayo y la poesía en valores artísticos e importancia social. La novela alcanza en la época contemporánea una altura insospechable y a partir de 1932 se coloca por encima de la española.[1]

In its conception, dating from José Joaquín Fernández de Lizardi's El Periquillo Sarniento (1816), until roughly the 1940's, the Spanish American novel dealt to a great extent with strictly Spanish American themes, as opposed to themes which might have universal applicability. The setting was more than just incidental to the novel; it was essential to its purpose. A number of examples can be mentioned to illustrate this. In Argentina gaucho literature rose to the stature of a cult, represented by Benito Lynch and Ricardo Güiraldes, among other novelists, in the twentieth century. Perhaps this literary tradition served in Argentina as a substitute for the Indianist literature in countries with a considerable

percentage of Indian population. Indianist literature, which decries the lamentable conditions of the Latin American Indian in a super-imposed Spanish-based society, is seen in many countries. In Bolivia there is Alcides Arguedas and his most celebrated novel Raza de bronce (1919); in Peru, César Vallejo and Tungsteno (1930); in Ecuador, Jorge Icaza and Huasipungo (1934); and in Mexico, Gregorio López y Fuentes and El indio (1935). These and other Indianist novels form the heart of what has become known as the Latin American novel of social protest. Much study has been made about the social aspects of the Spanish American novel. The fact that a novel takes place in say, Venezuela, and not somewhere else, has a significance beyond the mere fact that it has to take place somewhere. What is pointed out and studied is peculiar in its own way to that particular country only, and thus takes its place as part of a national literature rather than a universal one.

Mexico might best be taken as an example of a Latin American country with a literary history and tradition all its own, because of the Mexican Revolution. In the novel an exhaustive study has been made of the Revolution, and a point was reached where it was thought that nothing more could be constructively written about it. Who, after all, in the last twenty-five years, could continue the tradition of novelists such as Martín Luis Guzmán, Gregorio López y Fuentes, Rafael Muñoz, José Rubén Romero, and above all the man who started the tradition, Mariano Azuela? The prolific Azuela wrote novel after novel on the Mexican Revolution, of which Los de abajo (1916) is the most famous and probably the best. He wrote

many of his novels right during the action itself, while the history was being made. Others he wrote years afterward, with the advantage of hindsight and a valuable perspective of a number of years. As if Azuela by himself had not covered the Revolution thoroughly, how could any young author compete with the dozens of other authors and books written on the subject and be able to contribute something new, fresh and vital to the fiction?

Agustín Yáñez emerged as a major writer with the publication of Al filo del agua in 1947. Although the initial reaction to it, as the author himself points out,[2] was one of indifference, it was a remarkable book in a number of ways. First of all, it was another novel of the Mexican Revolution, but a work that presented it in a new light. It was a novel that was not destined to be confined to a significance totally within a Mexican framework. Its universality consists in its emphasis on the psychological processes of its characters, on the fact that much of the action takes place in the mind. As Joseph Sommers states:

> Yáñez is the first Mexican author who consciously transcends narrow literary nationalism, finding it no longer adequate to the demands of the modern novel. While his work is an examination of the national past, the themes and techniques are universal. Revolution by his treatment is not merely a Mexican phenomenon, but is bound up with such universal categories as the psychological structure of personality and the fundamental antithesis between repression and expression as the basis for ethical and moral norms.[3]

Other elements, too, gave Al filo del agua a more widespread significance, among them the religious commentary it offered.

Indeed, the very cornerstone of the work is religion, an overly-strict, exaggerated version of Catholicism peculiar to a particularly remote Mexican region. One must hesitate before stating that the religious element in Al filo del agua contributes to its universal applicability, since Catholicism is not universally practiced. However, it certainly contributes to increasing the novel's scope to apply to all of Latin America, for religion has unquestionably played a major role in Latin American history. In the sixteenth century the Spaniards colonized motivated by a desire to win converts to the banner of Catholicism, and the imprint of Spanish culture accounts for the overwhelming percentage of Catholics by population in Latin America today. In the words of Hubert Herring:

> The Church of Spanish America faithfully mirrored the shifting spiritual forces of the Church at home. The priests who came with the conquerors were afire with the crusading zeal of a Spain which had rid itself of unbelieving Moslems and Jews and had gone far in cleansing itself of timeserving priests, a Spain which, under the ardor of Isabella and Jiménez de Cisneros, had recaptured much of the religious fervor lost since the thirteenth century ...During the sixteenth century the Church gained spiritual refreshment from St. Theresa, Luis de León, and St. John of the Cross; and militancy from the newly launched Society of Jesus. This spiritual climate gave zest to the friars who were pouring out their energy and devotion upon the hard frontier of America.[4]

Latin American history goes hand in hand with the equally complicated history of the Church in Latin America, which weaves its way constantly in and out of the history books. The Church-State relationship has been a formidable factor in the shaping of Latin America as it is today. The example of Mexico more

or less parallels, in general concepts, the situation in other countries. A constant and overriding issue in Mexican politics has been, and still is, the extent to which the power of the Church is to be allowed in secular affairs. Mexico has numbered priests among its national heroes, perhaps the most famous being Father Miguel Hidalgo y Castilla (1753-1811), whose famous shout of independence (the grito de Dolores, 1811) is celebrated annually in Mexico on September 16th. Agustín Yáñez himself has seen fit to write a biography on the Protector of the Indians, Bartolomé de Las Casas.[5] And Samuel Ramos has gone so far as to say that "the history of Mexico, above all on the spiritual plane, is an alternating affirmation and denial of religion."[6]

The political influence and stature of the Church is, however, a secondary matter. Completely aside from all political connections, it is the Catholic faith itself which must be considered a moving force in the lives of many Latin Americans. It is perhaps difficult to determine what percentage of Catholics in Latin America are practicing Catholics; but it appears reasonable to assume that at the very least, the rural population, the Latin American peasant, is greatly influenced by religion, and his Catholic faith is a dominating force of his existence. At times it is not a true reflection of Catholic dogma, either because it is mixed with superstition, or due to lack of education; but an important factor in his life consists in the living and practicing of his religion. Perhaps this is more true among the women than the men. These impressions are in evidence in the writings of Yáñez, above all in

Flor de juegos antiguos, Al filo del agua, and Las tierras flacas. In reflecting them the author makes a substantial move toward creating a novel truly "Latin American" in scope.

In summary, the importance of Al filo del agua (and therefore of its author) is that while making a strong and new contribution to the literary tradition of Mexico, at the same time it contains characteristics which embrace all of Latin America, as well as universal characteristics. It is another novel of the Mexican Revolution, but from a different point of view. Its emphasis on religion reflects a very important and basic element, not only of Mexican but of all of Latin American society. This was done in an era when contemporary fiction writers had relegated the subject of religion to a place of secondary importance. Finally, Al filo del agua helped to initiate the current trend toward universality in the Spanish American novel, toward an "intellectualization" of it, and toward a heavy emphasis on style. As John Brushwood, noted critic of the Mexican novel, has stated: "It would be unfair to say that Al filo del agua changed the direction of the novel. But it does mark a turning point, embodies the characteristics of a new direction."[7]

As part of an attempt to define this new trend, Fernando Alegría has said: "Si hubiese necesidad de definir esta novelística, cuya mejor época empieza alrededor de 1930 y se extiende pasado el medio siglo, podría decirse que en ella el hombre de Hispanoamérica no ya el paisaje ocupa el centro de su atención . . ."[8] This has continued up to the present day. Thus, the Spanish American novel

has generally become far less regional and more psychological in its themes. In addition, it has become more intellectual in scope and content, thereby appealing more to a select minority. Orlando Gómez-Gil explains these phenomena in detail:

> Los acontecimientos políticos, económicos y sociales que animan el siglo XX . . . han producido cambios radicales en el mundo . . . el hombre se siente en medio de una tremenda crisis mental, moral y cultural que sacude los fundamentos más profundos de su existencia, produciendo un clima de violencia, angustia, desesperación, zozobra, temor, desesperanza, de alcance universal, porque afecta directa o indirectamente a todos los países de la tierra. La honda crisis producida no ha sido tanto en el mundo exterior del hombre . . . como en lo espiritual, moral y especialmente en la conciencia del individuo . . . Ha surgido un sentido universalista de la vida: el hombre se detiene ahora más en el estudio de su propio ser y en el de otros individuos, quizás en busca de una respuesta a sus dudas y enigmas. Aunque todavía hay interés por los problemas exteriores del hombre (políticos, económicos, sociales), el mayor énfasis se pone en los procesos de la conciencia, porque se consideran los más importantes dentro de la realidad total del individuo.[9]

As a result of all this, according to Gómez-Gil, "la prosa novelística . . . trata de presentar los movimientos de la conciencia, el mundo oscuro de la subconciencia y sus reacciones ante toda clase de estímulos e incitaciones. Es una novela más intelectual, menos asequible al público general y muchas veces para 'elites' cultas."[10] It is in this time period that Agustín Yáñez has emerged as a prominent literary figure. It has been said of Yáñez that it is unfortunate that he has such a preoccupation with style, because this creates too great a gulf between author and reader. But this approach to writing is not untypical of the contemporary Spanish

American novelist and prose fiction writer. The emphasis on style, including such elements as flashback, interior monologue, allegory, etc., can be seen in contemporary writers throughout Spanish America, from Julio Cortázar and Jorge Luis Borges in Argentina to Alejo Carpentier in Cuba.

Yáñez, along with other Mexicans such as Luis Spota, Juan Rulfo and Carlos Fuentes, has elevated the contemporary novel in Mexico to its present high status in this category. However, in some ways Yáñez is a difficult author to categorize. In some of his works, such as the two to be studied in detail here, he is obviously preoccupied with style, while other works such as Flor de juegos antiguos present a simplicity and straightforwardness which is in sharp contrast. And whereas the widespread applicability of a work like Al filo del agua is evident in addition to its regional significance, Yáñez also deals specifically with problems uniquely Mexican, such as the problem of the development of the Jaliscan coast, the government, the caciques and the land in La tierra pródiga.

Agustín Yáñez[11] has been, by any standards, one of the most outstanding Mexicans of his day, and has made contributions in many ways to his country: artistically, politically and otherwise. He was born to a middle class, Spanish-Indian family in Guadalajara in the state of Jalisco on May 4, 1904. His parents, don Elpidio Yáñez and doña María Santos Delgadillo de Yáñez, were from the small village of Yahualica. Yáñez surely knew of a true counterpart to the village of Al filo del agua somewhere in the state of Jalisco, and critics have suggested Yahualica, which the author knew well, as the most probable setting. It is also in this region that the

action of Las tierras flacas takes place. Yáñez has written a book, Yahualica, which discusses every aspect of the town: the people, occupations, diversions, historical aspects, etc., in over one hundred pages of pleasant description.[12] Each year the Yáñez family took a vacation in Yahualica during the months of August and September, and it was there as a boy that Yáñez witnessed the coming of Francisco I. Madero's troops in 1910, providing the basis for his description of the arrival of the troops in Al filo del agua.

He learned to read at the age of three, and as a child the young Yáñez was greatly impressed by the splendor of the religious liturgy and the importance given to Christmas and Holy Week. He looks back on his childhood in a nostalgic vein, and no doubt considered it a pleasant part of his life. In Flor de juegos antiguos (1941) he wrote a series of childhood episodes which together form what some have preferred to call a novel. However, there is a strong autobiographical sense running through Flor de juegos antiguos, and there are abundant descriptions of the Church pageantry and ritual which so caught Yáñez' attention as a boy. In many of the author's other earlier works there also exists an abundance of religious details pertinent to the discussion of his later works. Speaking of this, Linda Van Conant states the following:

> En todas sus primeras obras, Yáñez pone un énfasis muy especial en la religión; esto se debe, hasta cierto punto, a su deseo de lograr una correcta descripción de la vida mexicana en donde la religión desempeña un papel importante y en donde la iglesia no sólo ejerce un enorme control sino que, además, la filosofía y la psicología de cada individuo están matizadas por creencias religiosas absorbidas desde la infancia.[13]

Other childhood pastimes of Yáñez remind one of the young Federico García Lorca. Yáñez used to pass many contented hours organizing circus productions and puppet shows, editing imaginary newspapers, and creating and directing imaginary cities. Summing it up, he says: "en general tuve una niñez sana y tranquila, sólo en rasgos aislados son autobiográficos mis libros."[14] In any case, the dedication to the state of Jalisco which he shows repeatedly in his later life stems from his contention that, figuratively, the rose of his existence blossomed there.[15]

His education was a strict one along Catholic lines. He went to an elementary school in Guadalajara which was a seminary annex up to 1914. The Catholic education he received influenced him to the point where in 1916 he entered the Colegio de don Edmundo Figueroa, where he stayed until 1922. This school was also a seminary, and Yáñez was in this branch, that is, the boarding school branch. Harry Sylvester has pointed out that "Yáñez, himself a former seminarian, displays an immense knowledge of the liturgy."[16] Although he did not stay there permanently, it was at this school where he received his great knowledge of Catholicism.

This education is concurrent with his reading of the more or less contemporary writers of his day, among them the Spaniards José María de Pereda, Pedro Antonio de Alarcón, and Azorín. Before this, among his first readings as a youth were Uncle Tom's Cabin as well as stories and books which dealt with ancient Rome. Included in this category were Lucio Flavo, Quo Vadis, Fabiola, Los últimos días de Pompeya, and others. Also influential were El final de Norma, El amo del mundo, and Staurofila.

Yáñez's favorite foreign author is the American John Dos Passos, whose Manhattan Transfer greatly influenced the style of Al filo del agua.[17] Also, according to Mauricio de la Selva, Yáñez "es uno de los novelistas mexicanos que mejor conoce a Joyce."[18] This is not surprising, since Yáñez was one of the first to translate Joyce into Spanish in Mexico. Also both Yáñez and Joyce make extensive use of interior monologue, both employ religious elements in their fiction, and both have what some have termed a "Baroque style." José Luis Martínez discusses this, first saying that "con frecuencia se ha calificado el estilo de Yáñez, y en especial el de su novela más importante, como barroco."[19] Martínez then quotes Fernando Benítez: "Yáñez queda fundamentalmente como uno de los grandes escritores barrocos de nuestra época, su estilo es muy estimulante; yo lo veo como un gran altar del siglo XVIII, como un altar lleno de santos, de máscaras, de frutas, de sensualidad."[20] However, Yáñez rejects this name tag:

> El pretendido barroquismo de mi estilo es discutible e inaceptable como calificación general. Entiendo el barroquismo como derroche ornamental de tipo suntuario, superfluo. Si ciertamente existe en abundantes páginas profusión de elementos, ello responde a exigencias ineludibles de estilo. Mi aspiración es la de escribir con el menor número posible de elementos . . . En el barroco muchos de los elementos son superficiales e innecesarios . . . Al hablar del barroco pienso en su sentido peyorativo, descontando la importancia que ha tenido para el arte hispanoamericano en sus distintas manifestaciones, aun cuando así considerado no soy partidario de esa forma exuberante de expresión.[19]

In 1923 he began to study law at the Escuela Profesional de Jurisprudencia at the University of Guadalajara, and became

Licenciado de Derecho in 1929. According to Van Conant, Luis Gonzaga Pérez and Gabriel, two characters from Al filo del agua, are based on students Yáñez knew there.[22] During these years he held tertulias in his house with many young intellectuals, among them Alfonso Gutiérrez Hermosillo, Emmanuel Palacios, Esteban Cueva Brambila, and Antonio Gómez Robledo. From these meetings sprang the idea for Bandera de Provincias, which has already been mentioned and which Yáñez was to direct. This is the first of three periodicals with which he is to be directly associated. The others are Occidente, 1944-45, and Filosofía y letras, 1946-47. Bandera de Provincias, conceived as a communications link at the service of the young writers of Mexico,[23] was published twenty-four times between 1929 and 1930, and although this cultural periodical was doomed because of financial difficulties, it has proven to be a publication of first magnitude. There appeared a wide range of articles, and for the first time in Mexico, translations of James Joyce and Franz Kafka. From this venture Yáñez gained valuable journalistic as well as artistic experience.

In the realm of fiction, he experimented a great deal in the twenties, but apparently was unsatisfied with what he had written, since the first work he preferred to include in his bibliography of works was Baralipton (1930). Yet examples are available of these writings of the twenties in his volume of stories and short novels, Los sentidos al aire, published in 1964. One of these stories, dated 1924, Vigilia de la Natividad, is the first thing that Yáñez wrote in fiction. It is a preliminary personality

sketch of the character who was ultimately to become Luis Gonzaga Pérez in Al filo del agua. Also, these early works contain much of the pageantry of the Church liturgy which fascinated Yáñez so much. It has always been his opinion that a literary work must achieve other values besides that of art for art's sake, and it is no less true in his earlier works. He makes this clear when he speaks of the objectives he and his colleagues had in mind upon publishing Bandera de Provincias: "Nosotros pensábamos que los llamados valores estéticos no son en sí el fin de la obra. Creíamos que a través de ellos debían realizarse valores políticos, religiosos, morales. Estos valores que acabo de nombrar no otorgan, por sí mismos, calidad a la obra, pero sin ellos el arte puede ser todo menos arte."[24]

The thirties were "años difíciles, según el testimonio del propio Yáñez..; con excepción de algunos ensayos, nada de su obra aparece en letras de molde."[25] However, he did manage to keep busy teaching; in 1923 at the age of only nineteen, he had begun an incredibly long and illustrious teaching career, teaching history and literature at the Escuela Normal para Señoritas and the Escuela Preparatoria para Varones. Since then his teaching and academic activities have been almost too numerous to mention. Between 1932 and 1935 he studied philosophy at the Universidad Nacional de México; but he did not receive his degree of Maestro until 1951, having written on the life, ideas and works of Justo Sierra.[26] His teaching credentials include Professor at the Escuela Preparatoria Nacional, 1932 to the present; Professor of the

Colegio de la Paz, Vizcainas, 1932-34; Professor of preparatory and secondary education in the Ministerio de Educación Pública, 1936-52; Professor of the Gabino Barreda University, 1934-35; founding Professor of the Chair of Literary Theory in the Departamento de Filosofía y Letras de la Universidad Nacional, 1942 to the present; Professor of La Universidad Femenina, 1946-50; director of the Seminar of Literary Creation of the Facultad de Filosofía y Letras de la Universidad Nacional, 1959 to the present; and fulltime Professor of the Universidad Nacional, starting in May, 1959 and with leave of absence since September, 1962.

His administrative activities include: Director of Primary Education in the State of Nayarit, and founder and rector of the Instituto de Ciencias y Artes de Nayarit, 1930-31, where he introduced many new innovations; Academician of the Escuela Preparatoria Nacional, 1933-34, 1938, 1943, and head of classes of Spanish and Literature there, 1936-52; representative of the Universidad Nacional to the Congreso de Escuelas Preparatorias, 1940; president of the Editorial Committee of the University, 1944-47; Coordinator of Humanities and president of the Technical Council on Humanistic Investigations of the University, 1945-52; member of the Teaching Committee of the Facultad de Filosofía y Letras, 1943-52; elected vice-president of the International Institute of Spanish-American Literature at the meeting held in Albuquerque in September, 1951; and member of the Counseling Committee of the Centro de Estudios Filosóficos de la Universidad Nacional, 1962 to the present.

In addition to having lectured throughout his own country, Yáñez has delivered lectures in the United States and throughout South America, and several times has represented Mexico abroad. He was the director of the Oficina de Radio, 1932-34; head of the Departamento de Bibliotecas y Archivos de la Secretaría de Hacienda, 1934-53; representative of the Universidad Nacional de México, of Guadalajara, and of the government of the state of Jalisco during his period of governorship, 1953-59; government legate in charge of delivering the bibliography title for the reconstruction of the Biblioteca Nacional de Lima, 1946; representative of the Universidad Nacional on a rapprochement mission involving the universities and centers of advanced culture of Central and South America, 1946-47; counselor of the Mexican delegation to the Second General Conference of UNESCO, Paris, 1947; examiner of candidates for the foreign service of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1947; president of the Mexican delegation to the first Congress of Latin American Universities, Guatemala, September, 1949; and secretary-general of the Committee for the Organization of the Fourth Centennial of the Universidad de México, 1951.

Included in his bibliography are not only works of fiction but essays on politics and education, as well as works of literary criticism. Yáñez has written numerous articles on education, and has had his speeches while running for public office published under the title Discursos por Jalisco (1958). It has already been mentioned in the introduction that there was a twelve year period between the writing of Al filo del agua (1947) and La creación (1959)

in which he ceased to be a prose fiction writer. In 1952 he joined the select group of sixteen men that comprise El Colegio Nacional; and in 1953 he ran for governor of the state of Jalisco and won, serving at that post until 1959. He accomplished a great deal during his term of office, not the least of which was the opening up of the coast of Jalisco and connecting it with the interior, thus taking a preliminary step toward tapping a potential source of revenue. This experience is reflected by the problems and confrontations of the land, the government, and the caciques in La tierra pródiga (1960). Among the other achievements of his administration were an increase in the construction of schools, especially in rural areas, and a general budgetal increase in financial aid to the state's educational and cultural programs. Also, considerable attention was devoted to improvement in communications and electrification; this last element plays an important role in Las tierras flacas. All in all, Yáñez proved that a man of letters could capably hold down a political administrative post.

Following his governorship, he served as Undersecretary to the Presidency of the Republic from 1962 to 1964, and in this latter year he became Mexico's Secretary of Public Education, a position he held for eight years. Alfonso Rangel Guerra's summary of the progress Yáñez has initiated reflects the success he has had in this capacity:

> Durante su gestión como Secretario de Educación Pública se ha creado el Servicio Nacional de Adiestramiento Rápido de Mano de Obra, y el Servicio de Orientación y Formación Vocacional; se crearon las teleaulas; se unificaron las secundarias llamadas generales,

> prevocacionales y técnicas; se implantó el Calendario Unico para toda la República; se reformó la ley que establece el Premio Nacional de Artes y Ciencias; se modificaron los planes de estudio de la Preparatoria Técnica (Vocacional) y los de las carreras profesionales de Nivel Medio, en los planteles educativos dependientes de la Secretaría; se creó la Academia de Artes; se creó el Centro Nacional de Ciencias y Tecnología Marinas, dependiente de la Dirección General de Enseñanzas Tecnológicas, Industriales y Comerciales.[27]

Yáñez has said that his goal in the realm of fiction is to create a complete "retrato de México." This is evident when one considers the variety of settings and characters found in his works. Al filo del agua takes place in a small town before the Revolution; La creación is in Mexico City during the aftermath of the Revolution; Ojerosa y pintada describes the Mexico City of today, and a tremendous variety of character types pass through its pages; La tierra pródiga looks at contemporary Jalisco, and Las tierras flacas describes the lives of country people in a barren region in the 1920's. He wishes to realize a number of values in his works, and does not concentrate only on, say, religious or moral values. He realizes the pitfalls involved in attempting this, though he does not deny the possibility of doing it successfully:

> El que crea arte político o religioso está expuesto en cualquier momento a fracasar, pero en los grandes artistas comprometidos encontramos que el impulso creador de tipo estético supera y sublima los aspectos ancilares. Recuerdo a Fra Angelico, cuya pintura está al servicio de una doctrina religiosa. Un ejemplo más reciente lo encuentro en Diego Rivera. El profetismo es una constante en toda su obra: en toda ella diseña una realidad futura mejor, y no por eso deja de ser un gran artista.[28]

According to Yáñez himself, his literary style was much influenced by those of John Dos Passos, Aldous Huxley, and James Joyce. Perhaps it can be said that his style is more involved and complicated in those works of his that have been called novels. This study will concentrate on two of these works: Al filo del agua (1947) and Las tierras flacas (1962).

By way of a brief background it may be stated that Al filo del agua deals with the religion-dominated lives of the people in a small, obscure village of Jalisco in 1909 and 1910, just before the outbreak of hostilities of the Mexican Revolution. This is reflected in the title, as Yáñez himself states on the page immediately preceding the beginning of the novel: "Al filo del agua es una expresión campesina que significa el momento de iniciarse la lluvia, y --en sentido figurado, muy común-- la inminencia o el principio de un suceso."[28] One of the great descriptive pieces in all of literature is the "Acto Preparatorio", which describes in haunting tones this village of veiled women and repression. The priests dominate the people, from the super-scrupulous Padre Islas to the truly good, Christ-like pastor, don Dionisio. According to John A. Crow, the style seen here "tiene una cadencia y un ritmo hipnóticos. Es una especie de letanía . . ."[30]

In the work there are a large number of memorable, three-dimensional characters: Timoteo Limón, who tries to conquer a haunting superstition with the sign of the cross; Damián Limón, who learns the ways of the gringos and comes back to wreak havoc on the village; Luis Gonzaga Pérez, the ex-seminarian, who becomes

insane with his own peculiar brand of Catholicism; Micaela, the town flirt who becomes dissatisfied with the village after visiting Mexico City, and is eventually killed by Damián; the parish priest, don Dionisio Martínez, who has dedicated his life selflessly to God, but whose way of life caves in with the arrival of Madero's troops; nieces of the parish priest, Marta and María, the latter of a rebellious nature who runs off with the troops at the novel's end; Gabriel, the bell-ringer of obscure origin who exhibits a great musical talent; Victoria, the strange newcomer who absorbs from the people much of the blame for the disasters that befall them; and many others. Biblical and liturgical elements abound in the work, and in the end outside forces triumph over the traditional religious life of the villagers. Although the author wishes to point out that the religious atmosphere of the place is overly oppressive and therefore wrong, he never shows even a trace of bitterness in doing this. Far from being a condemnation of religion, Al filo del agua also points out its positive values, and glorifies the sincere efforts of the pastor to save the souls that are under his care.

Las tierras flacas takes place in a region which has been named La Tierra Santa by its inhabitants, but which is reluctant to bear crops and thereby sustain the hard working people who live there. These people are slow to learn and equally slow to accept change and progress. They practice a form of Catholicism mixed with superstition. The time of the novel is during the 1920's, and it ends with the coming of electricity to the region, thus marking the beginning of a new era.

There is a Biblical atmosphere present in Las tierras flacas, beginning with the Biblical framework on which it is set. The work is heavily weighted with proverbs. Place names are called by Biblical counterparts, and name symbolism is abundant, even in the names of the dogs. Interior monologue is also used to a great extent in this book, although it is not the stream of consciousness technique used by the author in a previous novel, La tierra pródiga. In this interior monologue, as well as elsewhere, Biblical phrases and allusions are common.

Perhaps of all the novel's characters, the one who is best created and developed is Epifanio Trujillo. This rich man dominates the region economically, and in certain ways is reminiscent of a Biblical patriarch, although in other ways he is the exact opposite. For Epifanio creation is the most beautiful of all things, and true to this belief, he has taken in scores of women in his life and has created a large number of illegitimate children, some of whom will later vie for his inheritance after he dies. Another, Miguel Arcángel, rebels against his father, and later comes back to bring progress to the area.

Three more characters are worthy of mention at this time. Rómulo and Merced are a husband and wife who, in debt to Trujillo, are forced to either give up their land or the sewing machine of their deceased daughter Teófila, which Trujillo covets. The machine has become a saintly relic in the minds of the people because of the saintliness of Teófila. Finally, there is the old woman Matiana, whom the people regard as an all-knowing seer, and who symbolizes the superstition of the region.

With this background information in mind, let us turn now to the elements of Catholicism that are reflected in Al filo del agua and Las tierras flacas.

NOTES

[1]Orlando Gómez-Gil, Historia Crítica de la Literatura Hispanoamericana (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1968), p. 564.

[2]Emmanuel Carballo, Diecinueve protagonistas de la literatura mexicana del siglo XX (Mexico: Empresas Editoriales, 1965), p. 292.

[3]Joseph Sommers, After the Storm (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1968), p. 67.

[4]Hubert Herring, A History of Latin America from the Beginning to the Present, 2nd ed. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1965), p. 170.

[5]Agustín Yáñez, Fray Bartolomé de Las Casas, el Conquistador Conquistado (Mexico: Ediciones Xochitl, 1949).

[6]Samuel Ramos, "Religion and the Mexican Mind," Odyssey, 2, No. 2, 110-121.

[7]John Brushwood, Mexico in its Novel: A Nation's Search for Identity (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1966), p. 8.

[8]Fernando Alegría, Historia de la novela hispanoamericana, 2nd ed. (Mexico: Ediciones de Andrea Edison, 1965), p. 209.

[9]Gómez-Gil, pp. 669-70.

[10]Gómez-Gil, p. 670.

[11]The biographical data included in this section comes principally from five sources: The introduction to John Flasher's dissertation previously mentioned; José Luis Martínez, "Prólogo: La obra de Agustín Yáñez," from Obras Escogidas (Mexico: Aguilar, 1968); Emmanuel Carballo, Agustín Yáñez (Havana: Casa de las Américas, 1966); Linda M. Van Conant, Agustín Yáñez: Intérprete de la novela mexicana moderna (Mexico: Editorial Porrúa, 1969); and the work of Alfonso Rangel Guerra mentioned in the introduction.

[12]Agustín Yáñez, Yahualica (Mexico: Etopeya, 1946).

[13]Van Conant, p. 40.

[14]Van Conant, p. 21.

[15]Rangel Guerra, p. 120.

[16]Harry Sylvester, "Revolution's Village," The New York Times Book Review, August 11, 1963, p. 4.

[17]Eduardo Jibaja, "Yáñez no Traicionará a las Letras," Humanismo, No. 4 (October, 1952), p. 84.

[18]Mauricio de la Selva, "Tres novelistas de nuestra América," Cuadernos Americanos, No. 114 (1961), p. 283.

[19]Martínez, p. 50.

[20]Fernando Benítez, "Yáñez visto por Fernando Benítez," Revista Mexicana de Cultura, No. 15 (October 11, 1964), p. 5.

[21]Carballo, Agustín Yáñez, p. 22.

[22]Van Conant, p. 22.

[23]Rangel Guerra, p. 131.

[24]Carballo, Agustín Yáñez, p. 25.

[25]Rangel Guerra, p. 21.

[26]Agustín Yáñez, Don Justo Sierra, su vida, sus ideas y su obra (Mexico: Universidad Nacional Autónoma, 1950).

[27]Rangel Guerra, p. 124.

[28]Carballo, Agustín Yáñez, p. 27.

[29]Agustín Yáñez, Al filo del agua, 9th ed. (México: Editorial Porrúa, 1969). Subsequent quotes from here on will be from this same edition, with page numbers given in parentheses. Italicized passages will be underlined.

[30]John A. Crow, "Dos grandes estilistas mexicanos," Humanismo, 3, No. 30 (April-June, 1955), 170.

CHAPTER III

ELEMENTS OF CATHOLICISM AS REFLECTED IN AL FILO DEL AGUA AND LAS TIERRAS FLACAS

In at least two of his novels: Al filo del agua and Las tierras flacas, Agustín Yáñez makes a concentrated effort to create a religious atmosphere as a basis for further development of plot, characters, and theme. Religion becomes the supreme underlying factor in the actions and thought processes of nearly everyone in Al filo del agua, whether it be a conscious effort to abide by religious principles, or an effort to reject them. It is also an important element in Las tierras flacas. However, there is a great difference in the pace with which the author establishes the religious atmospheres within the two works. In Al filo del agua it is established immediately and totally in the "Acto Preparatorio," whereas in Las tierras flacas it is established more gradually. The effect ultimately achieved: that of producing a religious atmosphere, is the same, although there is a fundamental difference between the two atmospheres, as will be shown later.

The first thing to note is that in the author's prologue to Al filo del agua, the "Acto Preparatorio," there are no characters introduced, and there is no introduction of a plot. This piece of writing, as Yáñez notes,[1] was not originally intended by the author to be part of an extended work; rather, the novel mushroomed

from the "Acto Preparatorio." This explains why it is so condensed, and for this reason it has tremendous emotive power.

Another aspect of the "Acto Preparatorio," perhaps a less noticeable one, contributes to the effectiveness of its presentation. It is written in a solemn, clipped style that reminds one of the Catholic litany. Thus the author takes his first step in establishing a religious atmosphere from the outset of the novel. Perhaps some readers would not be consciously aware of this litany; but for the average Catholic this cadence would have its subconscious effect, that of plunging him into a Church atmosphere of prayer.

A litany is a Church prayer addressed to one of the Divine Persons of the Trinity (Father, Son or Holy Spirit) as well as to a saintly figure or figures, often rather lengthy and consisting of a series of entreaties to which the answer is a simple request. There is a Litany of the Saints, as well as litanies dedicated to the Blessed Virgin, the Sacred Heart, the Most Holy Name, and St. Joseph. Usually the responses are either "pray for us," "have mercy on us," "deliver us, O Jesus," or "we beseech thee, hear us."

In group prayer during May devotions, forty hour devotions or Lenten devotions, one or more litanies will almost invariably be included. A leader leads the prayer and the entire congregation responds. Thus the litany is a symbol of a people united in prayer. It is therefore fitting that in the "Acto Preparatorio" the author sets forth a string of short invocations describing the village of Al filo del agua. Instead of the people invoking an individual, we have the reverse: here Yáñez, in his own form of litany, invokes

the town at the same time that he describes it. First, examine these passages taken from the "Acto," several of which are entire sentences:

Pueblo de mujeres enlutadas
Pueblo sin fiestas
Pueblo seco
Pueblo sin alameda
Pueblo cerrado
Pueblo solemne
Pueblo conventual
Pueblo sin billares, ni fonógrafos, ni pianos
Pueblo de perpetual cuaresma
Pueblo de ánimas
Pueblo de templadas voces
Pueblo sin estridencias

The rhythm and structure is highly comparable to a segment from the Litany of the Blessed Virgin:

Mother of Christ
Mother of divine grace
Mother most pure
Mother most chaste
Mother inviolate
Mother undefiled
Mother most amiable
Mother most admirable
Mother of good counsel
Mother of our Creator
Mother of our Savior, etc.

The response to this Litany of the Blessed Virgin is "pray for us." Perhaps the hypothetical response to the litany of Yáñez would be "I pray for you," in the sense of "Be careful. Modify yourself, for disaster is close at hand." The onslaught of the Mexican Revolution will change the lives of the people and the town, just as appealing to a saint will hopefully change the life of the person in prayer.

Also evident in the "Acto Preparatorio" are clipped descriptive phrases which, if combined into a litany, might occasion a response such as "deliver us." This is one of the responses in the Litany of the Saints: "O Lord, deliver us" follows each of the following invocations:

From all evil
From all sin
From Thy wrath
From threatening dangers
From the scourge of earthquake
From plague, famine and war
From sudden and unprovided death
From the snares of the devil
From anger, and hatred, and ill-will
From the spirit of fornication
From lightening and tempest
From everlasting death

It has already been emphasized that Yáñez is not hostile in his legitimate criticism of the manners and way of life of this hyper-religious people. He hesitates to come out strongly and directly against some of their practices, but if he did he would preach deliverance from the following, which he also mentions in the first chapter:

Tertulias, nunca
Horror sagrado al baile
Aire de misterio y hermetismo
¡Cantaran las mujeres! No, nunca
Pasos obsesionados
Cintarazos de los cuatro jinetes
Calvario del matrimonio
Monótonos campaneos
Constante zozobra por malos temporales
Aire de desencanto
Rigurosa separación de sexos
Labios consumidos. Pálidos cutis.

All of this combines to lend a wholly religious atmosphere to Al filo del agua, and this is done completely in the first twelve pages. What follows merely re-emphasizes or provides another example. New elements brought in by Yáñez in the succeeding chapters add to the plot of the novel, but fit into the already existent atmosphere instead of adding to it a new dimension.

The next thing to consider is the impression the reader derives from this description, and whether or not it is consistent with the intentions of the author. First, the reader feels this to be an oppressive, unnatural, undesirable atmosphere. At times Yáñez contributes to this impression by departing from his usual impartiality and making a biased, negative comment to influence the reader's opinion. At times he will describe something as the people might describe it, other times as he sees it as an opinionated outside observer. For example, he describes the inns on the outskirts of the town as "cantinas vergonzantes (5)." The adjective "vergonzantes" would be from the people's point of view. However, he later describes the pillars of the square "cuyas piedras reverberan melancolía por un ausente pensamiento nazareno y una emoción samaritana, también ausente (8)." Here the author goes out of his way to interject a negative comment about the village life. The people lack the charity of Christ; and the "emoción samaritana" undoubtedly refers to the Bible's Parable of the Good Samaritan,[2] the idea being that one must show Christian charity toward everyone, even one's enemy. Another example of a negative comment by the author is his calling marriage, that is, marriage as practiced in

the village "calvario (11)." Here he compares the agony that these people experience in their married life to the agony of Christ on the cross. Since these comments also have religious overtones, they contribute to the atmosphere of religious oppression achieved.

Examples have been pointed out to illustrate how Yáñez, in creating this atmosphere, emphasizes only the unpleasant aspects of religion, ignoring the positive elements. This is consistent with his purpose. The creation of a wholesome atmosphere would make the final result of the story, the storming of the village by the troops, an injustice. There are several items in the "Acto Preparatorio" which show that the atmosphere created is not ideal according to the precepts of Catholicism. Dancing is forbidden in the village; this is an unwarranted extension of something the townspeople assume is inherent in Catholic doctrine. In contrast, there are several Biblical references in the Old Testament which link dancing with rejoicing; and in the New Testament we see dancing in celebration after the return of the Prodigal Son. But here dancing is regarded as a grave sin in all circumstances, equal to or worse than that of murder or stealing.

Also as a result of this atmosphere, ecclesiastical songs and prayers are seen merely as a refuge for the breath of desire. "Hay que oírla en los rezos y cantos eclesiásticos a donde se refugia (5)." Thus their primary purpose is distorted. Similarly, the women do not sing except in Church; and so a distinction, even a complete separation, is made between ecclesiastical and profane song, the latter being regarded as forbidden fruit.

Weddings take place at the first Mass of the day when it is still dark. Again this is in direct contrast to the spirit of weddings in the Old Testament, which were cause for great pomp and joy. Christ came down to earth to reform, in part, the Old Testament and introduce the New Law, but not to make such changes as these people take it upon themselves to make. Matrimony, one of the seven sacraments of the Church, is degraded not only below the level of a sacrament, but as something to be abhorred.

As is done throughout the novel, casual mention is made of various prayers, many of which emphasize spiritual qualities contrary to the spirit of the village. The two prayers in which this is especially evident are the Miserere and the De Profundis: "Púas del Miserere para las espaldas . . . De profundis para lenguas y gargantas (9)." The Miserere, Psalm 50, is a prayer of penance. It is an interesting combination of the acknowledgement of man's innate sinfulness but yet a plea for mercy to an all-merciful God. The people of the village, however, prefer to emphasize the former. There is very little room in their hearts for forgiveness, as is witnessed by their attitude toward the unfortunate grandchild of sinful love.

The same thing may be said about the De Profundis, Psalm 129. It is a prayer for the dead, again begging God for forgiveness. The names of these prayers come from the beginning of the Latin Psalms, the Miserere implying mercy and De Profundis referring to spiritual, not physical, depths: "Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord; Lord, hear my voice! Let your ears be attentive to my

voice in supplication . . ."[3] Even after having said this prayer so many times, many people do not follow Christ's example of mercy.

A number of sacramentals, feast days, prayers, etc., are mentioned, which in themselves lend a religious atmosphere to the story. There are many different kinds of crosses on the houses of the village, symbolic of the suffering of the people who live there, just as it has its symbolism of suffering in the Church. In addition to the prayers already discussed are the Memento, homo, used in distributing ashes on Ash Wednesday, and the Requiem Aeternam found in the Mass for the Dead. These prayers are more in line with the emphasis on the unpleasant, which these people seem to prefer.

Two other things might be said regarding the style of the "Acto Preparatorio." Martha Díaz de León points out the following barely noticeable point:

> En este caso, ese 'Acto Preparatorio' tiene un sentido cuaresmal que se define precisamente por su división en cuarenta párrafos que sirven para la gestación (y la palabra gestación puede no ser accidental, ¿cuarenta semanas?) del tema, y que este acto es el acto preparatorio al nacimiento de la creación que en seguida tendremos.[4]

Ramona Lagos, commenting on Yáñez' "Litany of the Pueblo," also makes the following comment about his style:

> Este leitmotif constituye el sentido quintaesenciado de lo que el narrador entrega en los largos períodos de frases cortas, resume y define a la comunidad silenciosa. De aquí su carácter de letanía lenta y monocorde semejante al sonido reiterado de una misma nota, pesada y oscura, marcada sobre el resto de los acordes, determinándoles su sentido, ordenándoles su ritmo y dominando la sinfonía.[5]

One other device which is especially effective in submerging the reader into a religious frame of mind is the use of saints' days and feast days in place of calendar dates. This is the final step toward an almost complete desecularization of the life of the town as portrayed in Al filo del agua. As Díaz de León says: ". . . las fechas de los sucesos más importantes que ocurren en la novela están señalados [sic] por las festividades religiosas que en esos días se celebran. Los días santos de la Cuaresma son desde luego puntos de referencia muy importantes."[6] In the "Acto Preparatorio," it is true that Yáñez mentions two calendar dates, the eighth and twelfth of December, and doesn't tell us that these dates correspond, respectively, to the feast of the Immaculate Conception and the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe. These calendar dates, however, have a religious sense rather than a secular one, as most Mexicans would know, and such usage is rare in the novel.

Thus, in Al filo del agua, an entire chapter is devoted not to plot development, but to creating an oppressive religious atmosphere. Through this technique, Yáñez criticizes the people of the town without criticizing Catholicism as it should ideally exist. It is consistent with the author's purpose to justify the coming of troops and the Mexican Revolution by placing the blame in part on this society which we must believe was typical of the status quo in provincial Jalisco in 1909.

On the other hand, in Las tierras flacas the author does not choose to devote the beginning chapter to establishing an atmosphere; rather, he goes immediately into development of characters and plot. The time of the novel is in the twenties, and depicts the

aftermath of the revolution. The scene is not a provincial town, but the countryside, inhabited also by provincial people but in an atmosphere very much different from the village in Al filo del agua. Although once again it is religious, it is not so oppressive or unnatural. The religious sense of these characters is not dominated by super-scrupulosity; instead, they have as their greatest shortcoming the mixing of orthodox Catholicism and superstition.

Contributing greatly to the atmosphere of Las tierras flacas is a heavy dependance by the author on the Bible, which will be discussed later in detail and which has already been briefly noted in the Introduction. The Bible plays a greater role in this work than in Al filo del agua, where it nevertheless has considerable importance. But this Biblical atmosphere, which dominates the general religious atmosphere created, is established slowly. From the beginning of the novel until the end, one element builds upon another; each point contributes something new which adds to what has previously been revealed, instead of merely reinforcing something already established.

Aside from the Biblical atmosphere, Yáñez affords the reader many insights as to the religious climate nurtured by the people in this area. A few elements from the first chapter should serve to indicate the nature of this climate, how it affects the reader, and why Yáñez establishes it as he does.

The first chapter is entitled "Buenos días les dé Dios ¿cómo amanecieron?" corresponding to one of its beginning sentences. From this and from the first sentence, "Ave María,"[7] religion takes

the place of secular conventions. This has the same effect as the replacement of calendar dates by saints' feast days. Greetings are formed religiously, in accordance with the Biblical image of the land, called Tierra Santa, and the religious nature of the people. From the first sentence, and from the other ejaculations (short, one-lined prayers) at the beginning such as "Ave María Purísima . . . Sin pecado original concebida (9)," it is evident that devotion to the Blessed Virgin is intense. This is a positive quality that the reader is apt to admire, as contrasted with the many negative qualities of individuals that Yáñez describes in Al filo del agua.

The first indication of the people's distortion of the Catholic faith in Las tierras flacas is the matter of the sewing machine of Teófila, the deceased daughter of Rómulo and Merced. Because she was a saintly girl, the people regard her machine as a relic. In doing this they make two mistakes: first, Teófila is not a canonized saint, and for this reason the machine cannot be classified as a relic. It is and should be considered a completely non-religious item. Second, even if it were a relic, one would have to take care not to venerate the relic, but rather the saint associated with the relic. It would be by the saint's intercession that good works might occur. Unfortunately, here the machine becomes the object of worship, thereby becoming a substitute on earth for Teófila herself.

But the reader does not react unfavorably to this mistake of the people. He realizes that it is done out of ignorance, and not anything even remotely resembling malice or ill-will. In contrast

to the situation in Al filo del agua, the religious atmosphere in Las tierras flacas is unoppressive - definitely imperfect, yet far more bearable.

With regard to Las tierras flacas, John Brushwood has stated that "the strange role of the sewing machine is not intended to indicate the religion of the people, but to comment on their means of assuring their identity. Folk practices have joined with Christianity, but Yáñez is not portraying a primitively superstitious people."[8] Perhaps this affords an insight as to why the author does not establish a religious atmosphere immediately with a preparatory chapter, as he does in Al filo del agua: religion is not the sole dominating factor in the people's lives. The implication here appears to be that whereas the people in Las tierras flacas think that they are motivated by religious considerations, they are really using religion as a vehicle for achieving non-religious ends. It is probable, however, that they are not conscious of this; therefore, their devotion to religion does not cease to be admirable. It is also true that they are not primitively superstitious. But neither are they so sophisticated as to consciously use religion as a lever to establish their social identity without really believing in the Catholic faith and attempting to live it as best they can.

Yáñez wishes the reader to feel compassion toward the poor, common man of this region, and thus elevates him in stature in comparison with certain antiheroes of the novel. The more tolerable religious atmosphere he establishes is consistent with these

intentions. In addition to the Devil, these people have flesh-and-blood enemies, whereas in Al filo del agua the only enemy worthy of the name is the Devil. Unlike Al filo del agua, several characters in Las tierras flacas are presented as bad in the sense of ruthless and without feelings: Felipe, Jesusito, Plácida. In contrast are the simple folk such as Rómulo and Merced, who at times receive the reader's admiration.

In an attempt to crystallize exactly how Yáñez' sympathy for the poor country peasant is conveyed to the reader, perhaps a comparison can be made with Azorín's short essay "Vida de un labrantín." In a scant four pages the life of a poor country peasant is summarized in the most bland, indifferent style of prose possible. Indeed, the dominating theme is the utter indifference of this peasant, his total resignation to what befalls him without so much as a single thought passing through his mind about it. Of course, Azorín is critical of this, since he adheres to the spirit of progress and reform which had not influenced Spain as it had much of the rest of Europe. His method of expressing his disdain is to not express any opinions at all about this laborer, as though his actions were not worthy of comment. Also, he reiterates over and over the thoughtless, automatic reaction of the man to his bad luck: "¡Ea! ¿Qué le vamos a hacer? Dios dirá; Dios nos sacará del apuro."[9] Similarly, when two of his children die and the other runs off, his reaction is "¡Ea! ¿Cómo ha de ser? Dios lo ha dispuesto así."[10] And Azorín ends the essay by saying that if the peasant's wife dies first, the peasant will exclaim: "¡Ea! ¿Qué le vamos a hacer? Todo sea por Dios."[11]

Rómulo would be a good example of a character in Las tierras flacas comparable to this laborer. But Yáñez devotes considerable time to analyzing Rómulo and his way of life, and this implies his conviction that the character is indeed worthy of a great deal of study. Rómulo is one of only four characters who are revealed to the reader through the use of interior monologue. His relationship with his grandfather Teódulo, his past relationship with Merced, in short, much of his life, is closely scrutinized. As a result, more than one side of the man is brought forward. Yáñez does not wish to merely pass him off as an ignorant, unthinking peasant worthy of the reader's disdain. He is presented, at least to a small degree, as a man who thinks.

Scrupulosity is found to a certain extent in many characters, particularly Teódulo, but it is nothing compared to the preoccupations of Mercedes Toledo, Timoteo Limón, and Luis Gonzaga Pérez in Al filo del agua. Not only is this scrupulosity usually due to ignorance, but also it does not normally result in the repression of a passion or desire. The Tierra Santa is a region without a chapel. The people cannot hear Mass or receive the sacraments, and similarly they have no residing authority, a priest, to question in matters of faith. As Teódulo used to say: "Ya que no me confieso ni siquiera puedo ir seguido a misa pues por todo acá no hay ni una iglesia y el pueblo está a seis horas de ida y otras tantas de vuelta, lo menos en que puedo servir a nuestra Santa Religión es con esto de sostener sus Nombres Benditos (39)."

Rómulo, in his interior monologues, often falls back on his memories of his grandfather, whom he admired immensely. And he remembers how one time his grandfather was told "de no sé qué motores o máquinas para facilitar la labranza y romper la dureza de la tierra. Hizo la señal de la cruz y rompió en maldiciones (20)." In addition to highlighting the ironic juxtaposition of cursing with the sign of the cross, this also points out Teódulo's scrupulosity - but again, not on matters of sex involving repression of love. Rómulo, remembering the example shown him by his grandfather, is understandably hesitant to change. This explains his reluctance to accept the divining rod that his friend Palemón tries to thrust upon him to look for water. Here the question arises as to whether the use of such an article is against Church teaching. Palemón insists that it is not, that it is based on science and not witchcraft. But Rómulo, in the words of Yáñez, "tuvo miedo de verse metido en riesgos, pretextando mentirosamente que las varillas eran hechicerías y pactos del demonio, contrarios a nuestra Santa Madre Iglesia (33)." In alleging the rods to be forbidden by the Church, and alleging it "untruthfully," Rómulo may be right, although he thinks he isn't. The important thing to note is that he has no method whatsoever of finding out the truth. The scrupulosity of the characters in Las tierras flacas is therefore much more understandable and forgiveable than that of the villagers in Al filo del agua, who have priests to consult, including the liberal Father Reyes.

One more example from the first chapter along the same lines might be mentioned. In an argument between Rómulo and Merced, the latter affirms: "hasta pecado es, como desde chica les oí decir a los padres de iglesia . . . tanto de los usureros como de los que aceptan sus abusos (14)." Rómulo does not agree with her, but there is no priest available to consult. From this unfortunate situation arises the superstition which runs throughout the novel, and is synthesized in La Madre Matiana, who emerges into a major character as the novel progresses. There are already indications in the first chapter of her importance, such as the large number of concoctions and devices used to help Merced deliver her baby, Teófila, in a flashback sequence. Evident too is the tendency of the people to loosely attribute miraculous qualities to articles, and to regard any unusual occurrence as a sign from the hand of Providence. When Merced becomes pregnant, Rómulo says: "Casi nos habíamos resignado con la voluntad de la Divina Providencia, cuando su Ojo, que se venera en la Ermita del Cruce, nos hace el Milagro (24)." Similarly, when Merced gives birth, Rómulo's sister-in-law brings a wooden hand of Providence, "que se abre para formar los Cinco Dedos, y no ha faltado quien diga que se dio de milagro (24) . . ."

These, then, are the two religious climates nurtured in the respective novels, similar in some ways but different in tone and emphasis. The creation of a religious atmosphere goes hand in hand with the development of characters in any novel taking place in Jalisco, and is essential if the reader is to fully understand

these characters. The religious substratum of the Jaliscan personality is not to be underestimated, as Octaviano Valdés points out:

> . . . los lectores poco avezados o movidos por prejuicios, no es nada remoto que concluyan, que toda la religiosidad de nuestra gente de campo es sólo eso: superstición y equivocada credulidad. Lo cual es falso: pues aun cuando esas distorciones mentales invadan en mayor o menor grado su religiosidad, poseen sin embargo los sustanciales conceptos del cristianismo con suficiente claridad; esto mucho más en regiones tan cristianas como las de Jalisco.[12]

At times this personality is further complicated by a puzzling tendency to resort to violence when necessary: "Nunca he visto una explicación convincente de este fenómeno de la idiosincrasia jalisciense que aparece siempre maridado con otra proclividad igualmente vitanda: el fanatismo católico--más desaforado y cerril en Jalisco que en ningún otro estado. Diríase que el rosario y la pistola machihembrados son los símbolos definidores del carácter jalisciense."[13]

In order to emphasize the predominating importance of religion, perhaps it would be valuable to examine the characters of two individuals from two other Yáñez novels: the Gabriel Martínez of La creación, and Ricardo Guerra Victoria of La tierra pródiga. These are extreme examples in the sense that both men appear to have sufficient control over their destinies so as not to feel the need to take solace in religion. Yet neither would be able to discard the religious aspect of his character even if he wished to do so.

The Gabriel Martínez introduced in Al filo del agua will be discussed later. In La creación Gabriel has just returned to Mexico City after having studied music for several years in Europe. Relatively speaking, La creación lacks religious references, and the atmosphere of the novel is almost completely secular. But Gabriel struggles with the decision of dedicating himself to composing either ecclesiastical or secular music. At first he identifies his attraction to ecclesiastical music with María:

> --María era la iglesia. Unidos bajo el mismo techo desde muy niños, el metrónomo litúrgico acompasaba nuestras vidas; no conocíamos otra música que la eclesiástica, sumergidos en los confines de la parroquia y el curato, bajo la tutela clerical del tío Dionisio, que nos había recogido huérfanos, antes de que alcanzáramos el uso de la razón. Pronto María entró al coro; me gustaba distinguir su voz en ejercicios y ceremonias; me gustaba verla ensayar en las noches oscuras del curato; me habría gustado acompañarla en el canto; a solas recordaba las melodías que oía en su boca, imaginaba sus gestos y ademanes al cantar, sus risas cuando alguien desafinaba en los ensayos; me habría gustado ser el cantor parroquial que dirigía el coro y tocaba el armonium, cerca del cual se colocaba María, inclinándose para descifrar las notas que cantaba. Entonces conseguí ser el campanero y hallé voces más poderosas, que prolongaban muy lejos del pueblo el concierto religioso; me aferré por interpretar la música escuchada en labios de María, la música que María y yo habíamos escuchado quizá desde antes que naciéramos, la música que sigo escuchando en lo profundo, a pesar de los años, a pesar del teatro . . .[14]

But then Gabriel realizes that María, by introducing him to various theatrical celebrities, is influential in attracting him to the theater. He also realizes that Victoria, who financed his studies, had wanted him to study sacred music; but at the same time Gabriel's memory of her did not inspire him in a religious sense. This

inability to identify one woman or the other with religious or secular music parallels his inability to choose between one career or the other. And whereas the current atmosphere in which he lives seems to point toward his choosing theatrical music, the possibility of composing church music still lingers in his mind. He cannot totally escape his background.

Ricardo Guerra Victoria, the extremely powerful cacique of La tierra pródiga, is an ideal example of a man who wields a rosary in one hand and a pistol in the other. He is a ruthless opportunist who admittedly uses religion to achieve his own ends. In order to exert his dominance over the people of the region, he insists that they pray and say the rosary in a group, attend Mass on Sundays, wear scapulars, fast and abstain from meat on the appointed days, use holy water, and study the catechism. He imposes severe punishments on those who fail to comply with these mandates, and emphasizes as well the spiritual punishment that awaits the nonreligious: the everlasting fires of hell. He also uses religion in other ways: "Elena descubrió que . . . el alteño era un tímido sexual que trataba de ocultarse . . . bajo disculpas de origen religioso."[15] He invokes religion against Pascual Medellín, implying that the latter is a heretic and Communist, in order to discredit the authority of the government.[16] And he rejects the authority of the clergy: "él es el sumo pontífice de su religión y conciencia."[17] No one talks with the bishop except in his presence, and he tries to impede confessions; as much as possible he takes on the functions of the priest himself.

Yet it is evident that Ricardo Guerra Victoria is a man with a religious conscience, a prisoner of religious beliefs. He actually finds inherent value in his religion, which he cannot escape: "Guerra Victoria encarna la ambición, las malas artes, el machismo y los crímenes del conquistador; pero a la vez es muy religioso, al extremo de convertirse en predicador y sacerdote de sus mesnadas."[18]

These religious scruples were infused in him during his childhood, particularly scruples regarding women: "Había crecido y llegado a joven bajo inhibiciones de procedencia religiosa respecto a la mujer, que clandestinamente incitaban su curiosidad y violencia, mezclando imágenes de señora y esclava, bestia y ángel, devoción y golpes."[19] As with the villagers of Al filo del agua, he regards dancing as a sin, and at one point even calls a halt to a community dance. These scruples explain his obsession to control the land; land is often compared to woman in the novel, and for Guerra Victoria it becomes a substitute for woman.

The fact that it is necessary for him to have a "conciencia tranquila" is very important. This latter phrase is mentioned several times in the novel, and Guerra Victoria's adherence to religious beliefs helps to soothe his conscience. He achieves this by manipulating religion so as to fool himself, by bending dogmatic principles to suit his own personality. This is done to a certain extent by many Catholics. The important principle is that if there is any doubt whatsoever in the individual's mind about whether or not he is doing wrong, the scruple can be dismissed with a clear

conscience. The novel states that Guerra Victoria "no se mete en honduras de religión,"[20] and thus he is better able to convince himself that his actions are justified. But because of his religious background it is essential for his peace of mind that he do this. Whenever he cannot, his conscience triumphs somewhat over ruthlessness and pride; for example, he invites the bishop to give Confirmations.

At other times he considers himself to be the priest of the region, and this is part of his power complex. But even as he does this, his dual personality becomes evident. He considers his obligation to stress the importance of religion to the people as a true moral obligation to be scrupulously carried out. In the final analysis Guerra Victoria succeeds in deluding himself to pacify his conscience, but at times the apparent sincerity of the religious side of his personality stands out strikingly. An example is when he invokes God, in an interior monologue, to save the soul of Sotero Castillo, and also to forgive him (Guerra Victoria): Dios lo tenga en su santo reino bendito sea Dios que me libró de sus manos . . . Dios me perdone y a él en su reino por los siglos de los siglos."[21]

Thus, religion has a powerful and lasting effect even on Gabriel Martínez and Ricardo Guerra Victoria, and this underscores the extreme importance of the religious atmosphere of the novels of Yáñez which take place in Jalisco. From this basis a more specific analysis of Catholicism in Al filo del agua and Las tierras flacas will follow, beginning with the elements of the Mass that appear in the works, and their significance.

In neither Al filo del agua nor Las tierras flacas does the Mass occupy a position of primary focus, in spite of its being the most important Catholic ritual ceremony. In Las tierras flacas there is no chapel in the Tierra Santa, and therefore no Masses are celebrated. The people find a substitute for the Mass in other rituals such as pastoral skits; in general, they must constantly search for things to replace most of the aspects of the liturgy that they cannot, for geographical reasons, take part in. The Mass receives greater emphasis in Al filo del agua, although its description and discussion is deemphasized in comparison with the extended, elaborate descriptions of the once-a-year Holy Week rituals, for example.

Briefly, the Mass is primarily a rite of thanksgiving to God the Father. It takes the form of a meal of which both priest and congregation partake. In another sense, closely related to the concept of a meal, it is the unbloody sacrifice of Jesus Christ through the consecration of bread and wine, which become, respectively, the body and blood of Christ. Therefore it is a reenactment of Christ's death on the cross, and contains the central tenet of the Catholic faith: that Christ died to reopen the gates of heaven in order that mankind might live. In essence, the Mass has two parts: the Ordinary, which basically does not change, and the Proper, which consists of a series of prayers which vary according to the particular feast day being celebrated. The Mass which will be referred to here is the old Mass which existed before changes made in its structure in recent years, as

well as the change made from Latin to the vernacular. The Proper prayers, in order of their appearance, are the Introit, Collect, Epistle, Gradual (and sometimes Sequence), Gospel, Offertory, Secret, Communion, and Postcommunion.

In Al filo del agua, references to the Mass serve various functions. One simple function is to situate the reader in time in a very subtle, esoteric way, and on a larger scale, to show him the impressive knowledge the people have of Church liturgy. For example, in one of his interior monologues Timoteo Limón says to himself: "Ya estamos a mediados de marzo y apenas la semana que viene será de Lázaro (19)." The Gospel of the Friday of the fourth week in Lent describes Christ's raising Lazarus from the dead,[22] and so the next week will be the fourth week in Lent. The fact that Limón knows this indicates his knowledge of the liturgy, and in general the same might be said for all the people of the village. Yáñez constantly emphasizes the total dedication and preoccupation with religion which permeates the village by making casual Biblical and liturgical references throughout the novel, and implying that this is an integral part of the psychic processes of the people. Perhaps one of the most striking examples of this involving the Mass occurs when all the men of the village are on retreat, and the women are left to talk to themselves: "el tema de las pláticas no es otro: Pedro y Pablo, Andrés, Jaime, Juan, Tomás, Santiago, Felipe, Bartolomé, Mateo, Simón y Tadeo: Lino, Cleto, Clemente, Sixto, Cornelio, Cipriano, Lorenzo, Crisógono, Juan y Pablo, Cosme y Damián (56)." This list of names, ostensibly a list of husbands

on retreat, is taken directly from the list of saints in the Comunicantes of the Canon of the Mass, without addition or omission. It would not be an overstatement to say that these names are as much second nature to the villagers as their own names. There is also a symbolic implication. Those who are here on earth are called the Church Militant, i.e., the men of the village. These saints, however, comprise the Church Triumphant; perhaps this is what the women of the village subconsciously aspire to become, and the goal for which the men are preparing themselves at the retreat.

A similar example along the same lines refers to the tendency of don Timoteo Limón to be distracted by the women of the village. Try as he might to eliminate all temptations and impure thoughts, at times he is unsuccessful in avoiding them: "no, era el diablo, traía las figuras de cien mujeres apetitosas: María, Úrsula, Teresa, Paula, Domitila, Rosa, Epifanía, Trinidad, Ventura, Felícitas, Águeda, Cecilia (20). . ." Although this list of girls' names is not taken verbatim from the Mass, it is reminiscent of the Nobis quoque peccatoribus, which appears immediately before the Pater Noster. The Our Father itself serves the same purpose in the novel when used as a refrain, but in Latin, thereby becoming part of the Mass. This will be discussed a little later in reference to the parish priest, don Dionisio; but it might be said here that the author's frequent use of Latin phrases, from the Mass and elsewhere, contributes to this same idea of the village being strictly a Church community, like a monastery, instead of a secular one. Similarly, the use of the phrase "en aquel tiempo"

to begin a paragraph, as on page 100, reminds one of the words used to introduce the Gospel of the Mass.

As is the case in other areas of the Catholic faith discussed in Al filo del agua, it appears that the negative aspects of the Mass are the most emphasized. "Negative" here means either those aspects which do not deal specifically with rejoicing, as does an Alleluia refrain which appears in the Proper of the Mass after Easter, or else those aspects which deal specifically with sorrow or suffering. An example of the former occurs in the discussion of the Ejercicios de Encierro, which are for those who are "en peligro de tentación y los que hayan de pecar en pensamientos, palabras y obras (69). . ." The Confiteor, appearing at the beginning of the Mass in the prayers at the foot of the altar, is a declaration of man's sinfulness and a request for prayer, and includes the words quia peccavi nimis cogitatione verbo et opere. Although this demonstrates that the final Retreat Day of the men has been one of confession and peacemaking with God, it still focuses on the evil of man.

The specific references to the Proper of the Mass are even more negative, as can be seen from the only two sequences mentioned in the novel. The first is the reference to the Stabat Mater (83), which is the Mass Sequence of the feast of Our Lady of Sorrows, or Friday in Passion Week. It describes Mary's agony at the foot of the cross, and begs to share that grief as a stepping-stone to heaven. The other references are to the Dies Irae Sequence of the Requiem Mass (196, 207-8, 213, 365), which in addition to merely

having been mentioned has symbolic overtones in the novel. The "day of wrath" will be the day on which the troops will storm the village.

Among all the Mass Propers, the Requiem Mass receives special focus throughout the work. The recurrence of the phrase Requiem aeternam becomes a part of the reader, but one finds no such recurrence of a similar refrain of joy. Contrast the importance given the Requiem Mass in the novel with that of Christmas: "Navidad siquiera tiene la extraordinaria liturgia de las tres misas por un mismo celebrante, como en la conmemoración de los fieles difuntos, aunque no todos los años hay misa de gallo, y cuando la hay es una simple misa cantada, sin boato ni ruidos especiales (319)." On the other hand, Yáñez devotes extended scenes to the Mass for the Dead, and the main ideas from the Dies irae sequence are repeated over and over again in two different scenes.

In both instances the Dies irae, symbolic of the Requiem Mass, appears as a prelude to an imminent tragedy, and the reader accepts it as a forewarning, anticipating (or trying to anticipate) what will follow. The first example is when it precedes the tragedy of the murder of Micaela by Damián; it appears, in Spanish rather than Latin, at the beginning of the chapter entitled "El día de la Santa Cruz": "día de ira, de furor, aquel día, esa noche de divina venganza, en que fué concebida la abominación y previno el Supremo Juez un gran castigo para el pueblo (196)." It then reappears woven in among don Dionisio's nightmarish dream the night of the feast of the finding of the Holy Cross. The "Supremo Juez"

(God) referred to above is the same as the "judex" in the Sequence, which refers to the day of the Last Judgement. This might be taken as a bad omen of things to come, as might the other sections of the Sequence running through Dionisio's nightmare, nearly all of which have a funereal, dark, deathly ring of wrath to them. Quantus tremor est futurus refers to man's fear of the Supreme Judge; quidquid latet apparebit refers to those things which each man has hidden inside himself which will be avenged; ingemisco tamquam reus emphasizes man's guilt; mors stupebit et natura calls attention to the coming of death, as does the grave-like intonation of per sepulcra regionum, etc. All this is consistent with the author's purpose. The Mass for the Dead symbolizes the upcoming death of Micaela and that of the entire village. Also, it is appropriate in connection with the death of don Dionisio's dreams and hopes, which are soon to be shattered. Since he is tormented as well by feelings of self-guilt, as though he alone were responsible for all the ills of the village, other portions of the Dies irae are included to reflect his desire for contrition and the receiving of God's mercy. Cor contritum quasi cinis (207), followed by Rex tremendae majestatis, Qui salvandos salvas gratis, Salva me fons pietatis (208) serve as a background for this self-mortification, and is one of the devices Yáñez uses as a background to arouse the reader's heartfelt sympathy for the priest, and to add to the religious atmosphere. The scene describing his nightmare concludes, however, by emphasizing the element of condemnation and eternal fire, which is what most contributes to the agony of Dionisio.

The second and final time that the Requiem Mass appears, with its dies irae, dies illa leitmotif, is in the final chapter, and thus previews the coming of the troops and the flight of María. The particular feast being celebrated is that of All Souls Day (November 2nd), on which three Masses per priest are offered for those in Purgatory. In a way, the entire village is offering itself up for the holocaust which is soon to follow. The people desperately need something or someone to save them from the imminent disaster which by this time is sensed and felt by nearly everyone. This is highlighted by the repetition, first in Latin and then in Spanish, of a section of the Offertory hymn of the Requiem Mass: "Libera eas de ore leonis, ne absorbeat eas tartarus, ne cadant in obscuram: sed signifer sanctus Michael repraesentet eas in lucem sanctam . . . libera eas (365). . ." which two pages later is reiterated: "Líbralas del profundo lago y de las fauces del león . . . el abismo no se las trague, ni caigan en las tinieblas . . . el Príncipe San Miguel condúzcalas a la santa luz (367). . ." The fact that this is the Offertory hymn is significant in that the people have, in effect, offered themselves and their old way of life as a sacrifice to the Revolution which is about to come. Still, they don't want to do it, and they call on the traditional standard-bearer of the faith, St. Michael, to aid them. St. Michael appears so often in both novels because he is taken to be the antithesis of the Devil, the people's chief enemy. Since all enemies can eventually be traced to the Devil, St. Michael is the natural figure to emerge from the people's subconscious. Likened to the

Devil, both in this Requiem Mass scene and the previous one, is Damián Limón. In the first scene he appears with Micaela, and in the second he has returned to the village in disguise. His presence indicates that havoc will be wrought on the village.

María flees the village in the end, and thus does not consider herself a "victim" of the tragedy; Marta, however, is one of those victimized. Again the Requiem Mass reflects this, since its Gospel talks about Martha, one of only three or four times in which Martha is mentioned in Scripture.

Other examples, too, are seen in which portions of the Gospel are taken out of the context of the particular feast day, and offer pertinent comments on the particular scene being treated. Early in the novel, the Gospel of Monday in Holy Week, which mentions Mary Magdalene and Martha, brings torturous thoughts to the priest's mind: "También el Evangelio habla de Marta . . . Marta, la sobrina del señor cura . . .; pero enérgicamente ha rechazado tales pensamientos y su alma se levanta con ligereza (92). . ." This is also coincidental in the sense that the author had just finished talking about Marta and María, and continues to talk about them in the immediately succeeding pages.

Another example of the symbolic use of a portion of the Gospel is found in the description of Father Islas' sermon from the Epistle of Ascension Thursday:

> Una nube le sustrajo a sus ojos, y como estuviesen con la vista clavada en el cielo, mientras Él se iba, he aquí que dos varones se les pusieron delante con vestiduras blancas, los cuales les dijeron: ¿qué estáis mirando al cielo? Este Jesús que de vosotros ha sido recogido, vendrá de la misma manera que le habéis contemplado (249).[23]

Christ's going away here pertains directly to Father Islas, in that his lack of true Christian charity and his twisting of the principles of Catholicism to an absurd extreme symbolize the slow withdrawal of Christ, that is, religion, from the hearts of the people under Father Islas' direction, hopefully to return another day. Another interpretation would be that it refers to the departure and eventual return of Gabriel to the village. For the moment, it is sufficient to point out that Gabriel occupies a somewhat celestial place in the novel through his constantly being compared with Gabriel the archangel. He was always in the bell tower, the highest spot in the village and toward which the people always looked up. Thus his leaving might be construed as an ascension, both physical and spiritual.

Perhaps the final function of the Mass in Al filo del agua is that it symbolizes the traditional past which is to be shattered forever in the wake of the Mexican Revolution. It carries this symbolism especially in the eyes of don Dionisio, who at times uses it as a "security blanket" to fall back on, in order to avoid disturbing, agonizing thoughts. Throughout pages 242-245 portions of the Our Father (in Latin and therefore part of the Mass) permeate his thoughts. He is tormented by thoughts of his dream of a few nights before, but eventually, as he interrupts his unpleasant thoughts with refrains from the Mass, he succeeds in falling asleep, thereby achieving a temporary respite from his anguish.

An early sign of this tendency occurs when Yáñez informs us of how very slowly don Dionisio says his daily Mass, as though he

never wanted to finish it: "Escrupulosamente lenta es la celebración. Lento el revestirse. Mucho más lento el consagrar y el consumir. Prolongada, la acción de gracias, cubierta con las manos la cara, sobre el reclinatorio (40-41)." And when things are going wrong, the priest clings to the security of something he has known and cherished: the Mass. He feels completely away from the world when engaged in this sacrifice, as if nothing could harm him.

The same thing happens in the final scene of the novel. According to Harry Sylvester, "under the impact of the night's events he [don Dionisio] has reached some understanding of how he and the society in which he ministers have failed. In grief but with dignity under the newly doubtful eyes of the villagers, he can only make one immediate response, and this for him must be the Mass."[24] The final page introduces lines from the prayers at the foot of the altar, the final sentence being "Ad Deum qui laetificat juventutem meam," reiterated twice. Discussing this part, Eileen Connelly states that "la última frase de la novela sugerirá la frase final de la acción eterna de todos los ritos, la promesa de la resurrección."[25] That is, it is ironic that the end of the novel should be the beginning of Mass, except that in it is contained the hope that the villagers, now spiritually dead, will again rise to life, and perhaps establish a better spiritual climate than they had before. Also, the beginning of Mass parallels the beginning of the Revolution. The idea of youth contained in the passage ("To God, who gives joy to my youth") contrasts the situation of don Dionisio, who will never again see his youth,

and will have to wait quite some time to experience joy. He can only beg God to aid him in his struggle with unholy people: "discerne causam meam de gente non sancta (387)."

As already stated, only fleeting glimpses of the Mass as such are seen in Las tierras flacas; there is no chapel in the Tierra Santa, and no priest to celebrate Mass even if there were. To a great extent, the atmosphere and the attitudes of the people of the region, especially Epifanio Trujillo, remind the reader of the Old Testament rather than the New; the concept of the Mass was introduced by Christ Himself at the Last Supper. Despite this, the actual time of the novel is during the 1920's, the Mass does exist, the people are aware of this although they don't have it, and therefore it does receive occasional references. First of all, the reason there are no Masses can be traced directly to the attitude towards Mass of Epifanio Trujillo, the most powerful man of the region: "Yo digo que para no más rezarle a Usted y a los Santos, en cualquier lugar se puede, no habiendo los requilorios que pide la misa o el bautismo y otras ceremonias con padre y todo; el cielo raso es suficiente y más directo para levantar los ojos y rezar (283). . ." This point of view is strictly an Old Testament one, and as a result the people must create other rituals as a substitute for the Mass. Teófila's sewing machine is adored by many as a relic because the people, who in spite of lack of facilities retain a deep fervor in their religion, are looking for something, anything, to adore, in order to give their religious sentiments an outlet. The result is the very curious situation in which the

closest thing to a Mass in the Tierra Santa are the movements of Teófila with her sewing machine. At least, the people felt something akin to the feeling of attending a Church ceremony while watching her, which Merced describes in the first few pages: "Seria, lista, segura, sus movimientos tenían algo de los de los padres en el altar (12)." Just as the townspeople of Al filo del agua admired the priests, the people here, including Epifanio, admired Teófila when she lived.

Mass is denied the people at times to the extent that, even when they go into town, they are unable to hear Mass due to one turn of events or another, such as the one involving the man who was arrested for being "indecent" (161). Candles are occasionally linked with the Mass, as when Epifanio falls asleep after lighting candles on All Souls Day, and encounters St. Michael with his sword (123), again reminiscent of the Offertory of the Requiem Mass. Finally, the author alludes to the Confiteor in reference to the desire of the people to throw the guilt for all the evil that befalls the Tierra Santa on the shoulders of Epifanio: "Llovía sobre mojado encima de la Casa Grande. Por su culpa, por su culpa, por su grandísima torpeza (221)." This variation of the Confiteor's mea culpa mea culpa mea maxima culpa is written in third person rather than first, reflecting the tendency of the people to blame someone else. The concept of guilt fascinates Yáñez, and his paraphrasing of the Confiteor, with minor alterations, provides a religious background for commentary on this highly religious theme. The same device is found in La tierra pródiga,

in the scene near the end when Elena commits suicide: "El dominio de tu marido ha llegado a su fin por tu culpa, por tu culpa, por tu gravísima cobardía."[26]

In summary, in accordance with the Old Testament atmosphere pervading Las tierras flacas, the few references to the Mass found in the text are of little consequence. The Mass is most conspicuous by its absence, as is Church liturgy in general.

In discussing the emphasis on the Church "liturgy" in Al filo del agua and Las tierras flacas, it is to be understood here that the word liturgy is to be taken in its broadest sense: it refers to the Church calendar as well as the outward manifestations of adoration of God. According to the Catholic Dictionary of the Holy Trinity Bible, liturgy is the public worship offered to God by the Church; it is not the same as rubrics, which are the directions for the conduct of liturgical services. Ceremonial actions performed according to these directions, or altars or vestments designed according to the rubrics, are called rubrical.[27] Yáñez does not adhere to this definition, as is seen in Al filo del agua when he calls the monument that Marta imagines in the multi-colored sky "éxtasis de la liturgia sidérea (95)." This study will not make such a distinction, either.

It has already been said that in Al filo del agua the liturgical calendar is used almost completely in place of the secular one, thus contributing to the monastic atmosphere of the village. Occasionally this affords special insights into the character of an individual or of the people as a whole. For example, Timoteo

Limón rationalizes not going to the Lenten spiritual exercises on the grounds that Lent comes very late that particular year, with Easter falling on April 11th (19). Since on the liturgical calendar Easter varies from the last week in March to the 22nd of April, this is only an average date; thus it becomes evident that Limón is merely groping for an excuse. Nevertheless, he and many others know the calendar well, which contrasts starkly with the situation in Las tierras flacas. Basically, about everyone in the Tierra Santa depends almost exclusively on Matiana for information on the liturgical calendar. Rómulo on occasion is forced to admit to ignorance as to what time of year it is because of not having recently seen Matiana: ". . . debe haber sido la semana de pascua (bien a bien acá no sabemos el calendario si no andamos preguntándole a Matiana las fechas (254). . ." With Teófila gone, Matiana becomes the substitute for the priest of the region, and if the priests of Al filo del agua are influential on the thought processes of the people, then Matiana wields an even greater power in comparison:

> La necesidad, la curiosidad, la devoción o el gusto mueven la junta de los dos calendarios. Se acude a Matiana para saber cuándo hay que mandar al pueblo por las palmas benditas que han de defender las puertas de las casas; por los cordones de San Blas para los males de la garganta; por las velas de la Calendaria y el Santísimo para la hora de la muerte y contra las tempestades deshechas; cuándo es el último día en que se puede cortar la flor de la santamaría para formar cruces y coronas que ahuyentan perjuicios y moscos; cuándo es la noche de San Juan para buscar el trébol de la buena suerte y bañarse temprano en el río; cuándo es la fiesta de San Antonio para cumplir las mandas por animales perdidos y matrimonios avenidos; cuándo han de comenzarse los siete domingos de San José, para que resuelva lo que mejor convenga a los pretendientes; cuándo caerá la

> fiesta de San Miguel para ir al pueblo, y el día de difuntos, y la Nochebuena para ir preparando las pastorelas (90-91).

As might be expected, the liturgical pageantry most emphasized in Al filo del agua relates to Lent, particularly Holy Week. Other ceremonies related in some detail are those having to do with All Souls' Day and the feast of the finding of the Holy Cross. Both of these emphasize death, because almost the entire emphasis of Holy Cross Day is on death and the Last Judgment. The constant repetition of the word "morirás" reinforces the morbid atmosphere of the village: "Morirás. Morirás. Por el Valle de Josafat pasarás (202)." Not emphasized are Christmas, the Epiphany, pilgrimages, the adorning of altars, or the Solemn High Mass. The Spiritual Exercises, which John Flasher has already analyzed in depth in his dissertation, might be presented as another example of an extreme attempt, at least in this village, to instill an unnatural, terrifying fear of God into the parishioners' hearts as the basic element of their spiritual nourishment.

The bizarre personality of Luis Gonzaga Pérez goes hand in hand with the discussion of the Holy Week liturgical services and customs, for it is Luis who is most influenced by them. Although a great many factors combine to drive Luis to insanity, it is the Good Friday service (the Adoration of the Cross and the Mass of the Presanctified) which serves as the catalyst to push him over the brink. How and why this happens must inevitably involve a discussion of his personality.

Luis Gonzaga Pérez was an undeniably intelligent, yet proud lad who had entered the Seminary bent on leading a saintly, scholarly, industrious life. After returning from the Seminary to the village for the summer, he decided to set up a daily work, study and pray schedule, under which he thought he would groom himself mentally and spiritually for his return to the Seminary. However, the schedule was so rigorous that he did not have the fortitude to stick by it, because in reality he lacked a true religious vocation. When he dropped out of the Seminary, he was congratulated by Father Reyes, one of the parish priests, who correctly analyzed his motives for wanting to become a priest: "Luis, tú eres un católico a lo Chateaubriand; de la religión te gusta lo externo, que halague los sentidos. Apuesto que aspirabas al sacerdocio por lucir los ornamentos, porque te besaran la mano, etc. Hiciste bien destripando (119)."

The intelligence of Luis is brought out specifically by Church liturgy, which completely provides him with the motivation he uses to write articles and poems, and to create his strangely allegorical incendios during Holy Week. It also reveals itself in his refusal to accept as truth certain second-hand stories relating miraculous events. When his mother tells him about how a stream rose up to stop some soldiers from crossing, forcing them to go back, Luis' reply is curt and to the point: "Las mojigangas de los indios. Yo no sé cómo este cura tan celoso no ha acabado con ellas (111)."

In one way, the reader sympathizes with Luis. The coming of Holy Week excites him and brings joy to him, which it should to

everyone: "Desde los años de Seminario, quizá desde antes, la llegada de la Semana Santa le produce un regocijo interior difícil de descubrir: quisiera componer armonías, pintar grandes cuadros murales, realizar un poema de proporciones o brevísimos versos que fueran joyas de la literatura universal (93)." This ecstasy that he feels would be admirable, were it not that he fails utterly to keep it in check. According to Porfirio Sánchez, this is due to two reasons: Luis' pride, and because for him the liturgy is an outlet for his sensuality. First, Sánchez describes Luis as "el ex seminarista de orgullo satánico."[28] This trait comes to the fore when Luis, considering himself one of Mexico's great potential intellectuals, is enraged when Father Martínez (don Dionisio) refuses to allow him to take part in the Good Friday services for having attended a meeting of Spiritists. This causes him to run out into the country and meditate on the hill, which is the start of his troubles. Secondly, Sánchez claims that "el muchacho encuentra en las prácticas religiosas un medio para llegar a paroxismos de sensación que él clasifica como 'misticismo.'"[29] While on the hill, Luis creates his own Good Friday service; at the very least his overly-fertile imagination has gone berserk on him, and from then on, his discourse turns into one of evil vengeance toward Father Martínez, rather than one of lament, which the actual Adoration of the Cross emphasizes because of Christ's death on the cross.

As noted above, Sánchez mentions Luis in connection with Satan; in the Good Friday scene on the hill, however, Luis also becomes a demented Christ figure, as he sacrifices himself just as

Christ sacrificed himself for mankind on the cross. In addition, he becomes the symbol of the priest in the ceremony, as well as the Judas figure who wants to betray the figure of Christ in the village, don Dionisio: ". . . no hablará ya nunca más con el señor cura y tratará de que lo quiten del pueblo (112)." This complex symbolism is consistent with the complex nature of Luis, and parallels his mixed-up state of mind in this scene. Running through his mind, as echoed from the village far in the distance, is the refrain flectamus genua, levate from the Adoration of the Cross. This sensuality stimulates Luis, as the liturgy always had; and as Father Martínez recites the Ecce lignum Crucis, Luis imitates him. This is a ceremony whereby a cloth covering the cross to be venerated by the people is uncovered little by little, each time with the repetition of the words ecce lignum crucis. As the priest ascends the altar steps, he chants, and finally prostrates himself at the foot of the cross. Luis does the same: "A medida que ascendía por el monte iba repitiendo: --Ecce lignum Crucis . . . y postrándose con la cara en el suelo: --Venite, adoremus (113)." The hill has converted itself into an altar of sacrifice, and Luis, in effect, sacrifices himself as did Christ, except that Luis is motivated by vengeance.

Luis continues by reciting Jesus' lament, which is also found in the Good Friday text. The author's description of the landscape, "terroso, calcinado, sin árboles (114)," compares favorably with the landscape of the actual Calvary scene. Then, in Luis' final harangue against the pueblo, this latter word acquires a double

meaning. He addresses himself to the pueblo in the sense of "town," but the word pueblo can also mean "people." In this sense, Luis is converted into the figure of Christ, and this pueblo of Jalisco becomes the entire Mystical Body of Christ, mankind on earth, rejecting Luis (because he is rejected, alone out in the country) as mankind rejected Christ:

> --Pueblo mío, amargo y sordo. Ingrato. Incomprensivo. Te quiero y me desprecias. Quiero tu gloria y me humillas. Lucho por tu esplendor y me combates. Mi esfuerzo es por tu renombre y te burlas de mí. Me desvela tu prosperidad y haces ludibrio de mis aspiraciones. Mi sacrificio te sirve de mofa. Mis disciplinas te hacen reír. Conviertes en escarnio mis obras y no hay empresa mía que no hagas pasto de ridículo. En verdad te compararon con Jerusalén. Día llegará en que tu dureza se convierta en asombro, tu desamor en blandura. Cuando escuches llegar mi nombre por trompetas de fama. Entonces te arrepentirás de las vergüenzas que me diste y querrás atraerme a tu regazo, ahora hosco, pueblo mío hermético (115-16).

The comparison with Christ is evident, but it is a bitter, egotistical Christ. In the end, the hopeless contradiction that is Luis crystallizes as the Judas and Christ figures that he represents come together: "Pueblo mío, yo venceré tu obstinación, yo venceré la obstinación de tu cura y tu ceguera. He nacido para salvarte y tus escarnios me exaltarán (117-18)." Luis feels that he is motivated by a desire to glorify the village, in the sense that once he becomes famous as an intellectual, the village will reap some of his glory also. But his sincerity is doubtful, especially since by this time his mind is turned. His cries of flectamus genua, levate, are intermingled with liturgical elements from the

Stations of the Cross: "Adorámoste, Cristo, y bendecímoste: que por vuestra Santa Cruz redimiste al mundo y a mí, pecador; amén (119)." This could be a mixup on the part of Luis in his recollection of the liturgy, indicating that his mind is going.

The next day, in a state of delirium, Luis becomes engrossed with the ritual of Holy Saturday: "Al amanecer, cuando prenden el fuego nuevo (145)." He compares his situation to that of Holy Saturday morning. Had he died out on the hill, his soul would be newly lit, like the blessing of the new fire. This is another indication of the strong imaginative power that a Church service can have on a youth. Yáñez himself was tremendously taken with the liturgy while young, as is evidenced from the constant liturgical descriptions in his semi-autobiographical Flor de juegos antiguos. And it appears that he is somewhat awed even now at the splendor of this Holy Week pageantry from his detailed description of it. Unfortunately, here it works against Luis, given his state of mind. He has arrived at the point of being so immersed in the rituals that certain basic principles that form their bases become a mystery to him. For example, in reference to the Holy Saturday ritual, he speaks of the "tres--misteriosas--velas de la caña (146) . . ." In this service the three candles symbolize the Blessed Trinity, which has now come to the fore since the gates of heaven have been reopened. This symbolism is emphasized three times with the words Lumen Christi as each candle is lighted. But for Luis this is obscured by the pageantry that surrounds it: the basic principle escapes him.

In summary, these liturgical elements in Al filo del agua serve as a background which aids in revealing and reflecting certain character traits; and, in the case of Luis Gonzaga Pérez, they serve as a catalyst which is the primary motivating factor in setting his disastrous actions in motion. Despite all of this, the tragedy of Luis would not have had to happen. Two other factors contributed to its occurrence: the arrival of Victoria in the village, which unleashed Luis' baser passions; and the influence on Luis of Father Islas (who will be discussed later in detail). It was Luis' mistake to choose him as his confessor, and Luis' desire to discipline himself too rigidly can certainly be attributed in part to Father Islas' viewpoints and his super-scrupulosity.

In contrast to the spectacular celebration of Lent in Al filo del agua, in Las tierras flacas Lent passes the people by with hardly a word spoken. The beginning of Lent is ushered in together with the beginning of the windstorms that lash the Tierra Santa at about that time, an indication of the sacrifice and suffering that it stands for: "Se habían soltado los ventarrones que anunciaban la llegada de la cuaresma (220)." The next indication is found thirteen pages later: "Corrió la cuaresma en una calma chicha, entrecruzada de rumores (233)." It is an especially quiet Lent, liturgically speaking, because hostilities have broken out on the plain. Everyone is outraged at the crime perpetrated by the Trujillos, that of shooting Rómulo's and Merced's dogs and stealing from them their coveted relic, the sewing machine. This prevailing uneasiness prevents many people from participating in Holy Week

ceremonies: "Con tanta inquietud, escasos vecinos hicieron jornada al pueblo para visitar las Siete Casas y concurrir a las procesiones de Semana Santa, que otros años vacían los ranchos (236)."

As a result of this, the inhabitants, forced to stay home on the plain, must grope for a way to celebrate the Lenten season that is an integral part of their religion. They find it from a most unusual source: the interplay of colors that the landscape of the Tierra Santa offers them. In the minds of the people, the colors become symbolic, and convert themselves into a form of Church liturgy, in the sense that liturgy can be an outward manifestation of worshipping God. Just as in Al filo del agua, this is a heavy emphasis on the sensual aspect of the liturgy. It is felt by everyone, even, to a certain extent, by Epifanio Trujillo. Earlier, as Epifanio gloats over the prospect of possibly inventing a false miracle which would bring people to Belén from miles around, he envisions a chapel "humeada con tantas velas, irrespirable con el olor de tantas flores, brillante de lámparas y exvotos de plata, reventando los cepos de limosnas (56-57)."

Returning to the color scheme of the landscape, the first evidence of color symbolism is seen on the mountains, which are red as blood, symbolizing the blood Christ shed for the human race on Good Friday:

> Para los desterrados en este rincón del mundo, la cuaresma se reduce a sentir los colores con que la resequedad cubre campos y montañas, revistiéndoles metálica solemnidad. Según es la hora y la temperie del día, el gran velo oxidado refulge o amortigua sus matices. A la mañana, el sol-- oblicuo en

> la iniciación primaveral-- unta de sangre tierna, luminosa, los altos acantilados, los desmoches y resquebrajaduras de la cordillera, como pedazos de espejos encendidos en carmín, o tajos de corales al fuego (239-40). . .

This symbol is elaborated on farther down, and is combined with purple hues, a symbol of the repentance that all should feel on Good Friday:

> El aire seco rompe obstáculos y distancias a la transverberación, que hiere ámbitos y dilata los ardientes, profundos, contritos colores cuaresmales, a medida que sube la mañana el camino del mediodía. La implacable, creciente crudeza de reflejos muestra la desnudez, la desolación de la tierra; su piel despellejada por todas partes; manchada de inflamaciones y gangrenas; como nazareno caído en medio de montañas, todo el cuerpo azotado por turbas de huizaches, que invaden el escenario, encarnizadamente (240).

It is at this point that the height of the suffering of Christ is felt, as well as the height of individual repentance. However, as the agony passes, the intensity of the colors slowly passes, and this parallels the lessening in suffering and in the feeling of individual guilt. The time of day involved, as in Christ's agony on the cross, is the three hour period from twelve to three o'clock. When the time passes, the reader receives indications of the approach of the time of rejoicing, Easter Sunday. A crust of red is now partially gold. On Easter Sunday, in a spirit of gladness and rejoicing, the priest will wear gold vestments in celebration, contrasting with the purple vestments of Lent. A glimpse of that is revealed here, and also signs of light, barely discernible, are seen in the east, as opposed to the dark shadows

in the west. The reader feels himself in a state of limbo, waiting for something to break:

> Colores requemados: costra de sangre oreada en la extensión del Llano. Transcurridas las tres horas de agonía, los colores entran en reposo, se suavizan, juegan con los huizaches, las veredas y cercas; corren por las laderas; lamen mansamente las heridas y costras del paisaje; aclaran perspectivas, resaltándolas. El ocre sangriento se mitiga. En su descendimiento, el sol derrama yodo gradualmente cargado . . . El mundo vuelve a dividirse: las tierras al occidente caen condenadas a rápidas sombras: el oriente levanta defensas de luz . . . Al yodo se mezclan azafranes y añiles. El gran velo vuelve a ser morado, corroído de oxidaciones y escaras, que avanzan de poniente a oriente, precipitando lutos (240-41).

This description combining nature with religion can only be described as masterful, and these colors move the people, as well as the reader, to emotional heights they do not reach in other seasons of the year, as if this beautiful scene presented itself only in Lent: "En el sentimiento, en la sensación cuaresmal de los colores, los vecinos toman vísperas, comen ansias, comulgan en la religión de la tierra . . . tratan de adivinar la suerte, de hallar en los distintos rumbos del cielo, en los colores del cielo, señales (241). . ." Thus the religion becomes the land, and vice versa. Even the Holy Eucharist, which the people cannot normally receive, is found in the land, which is about all the people have. Even the winds, symbolic of the Lenten season in the Tierra Santa, cease as Easter Sunday approaches: "Enigma de los vientos. Los ventarrones van cesando (242)." As Lent ends, one final line from the Holy Week liturgy crosses the pages of

the novel: the crowing of the cock, mentioned numerous times in both novels, referring to the sign of the denial of Peter in the Passion of Our Lord: "Esperanza y angustia puestas en el velo de pájaros y abejas; en el caminar de hormigas y asquiles; en los gallos cuando cambia su hora de cantar (242). . ."

The only other substitute the people have for the conventional Church liturgy are the pastoral plays that are presented at special times of the year corresponding to liturgical feast days. They are generally presented with splendid pageantry and, in opposition to the attitude of Al filo del agua, are celebrated in times of rejoicing, particularly the feasts of Christmas and the Epiphany. The subtle difference of attitude of the people of the Tierra Santa, in comparison with the villagers of Al filo del agua, comes to light after a disturbance sours the performance of the Christmas pastoral. The author comments: "Había de ser esta noche del veinticinco de diciembre, día en que nació Nuestro Señor. (Peor que si fuera Viernes Santo) (176)." This puts Christmas in its rightful place as one of the greatest feast days in the Liturgical Year, the only greater one being that of Easter Sunday. Perhaps the most elegant pastoral is the one occurring on the Epiphany, after which Epifanio Trujillo is named. In comparison with, say, a given liturgical procession or service in Church on a given day, the pastorals often cover a far greater span of historical time, and can be staged with greater freedom of space and props. The Epiphany pastoral runs from Adam and Eve in the Garden of Paradise to the visit of the three Wise Men to the manger of Christ. Magnificent horses and costumes contribute to the enjoyment of the plays.

However, due to the nature of the atmosphere in which these plays are acted out, the result is that they turn out to be nothing more than entertainment, in the same way that any secular play would be entertainment. Although religious fervor can originate from viewing the pastorals, the possibilities are limited for the audience to meditate on the various elements of their religious faith presented. Therefore, they fall only on the very outskirts of what might be termed "liturgical ceremonies."

The seven sacraments of the Church do not receive a great deal of consideration in the two novels, with the possible exceptions of Baptism, Penance and Matrimony. In Al filo del agua, as in Las tierras flacas, Baptism signifies a beginning, both in a spiritual and temporal sense. In one scene Luis Gonzaga Pérez has this in mind as he begins the day: ". . . hoy se ha levantado con gran agilidad espiritual . . . siete veces ha puesto la cabeza dentro del aguamanil rebosante (92)." But even Baptism, by which a soul is reborn into favor with God, is made to appear distasteful: ". . . hay un olor suyo, inconfundible, olor sudoroso, sabor salino, en los rincones de los confesionarios, en las capillas oscurecidas, en la pila bautismal (7). . ." A bit of salt is placed on the tongue of the person baptized, symbolizing the knowledge of God and the protection from evil; but the effect achieved in the description of the "Acto Preparatorio" is not one of joy, but of displeasure.

In Las tierras flacas, Baptism for the most part is not considered from the spiritual point of view, but from the secular one.

With regard to the name symbolism prevalent in the novel, the author speaks of the "bautizo legendario que convirtió al Llano de los Tepetates en el Plan de la Tierra Santa (54)." Just as man is given a name, and just as man's soul is reborn with a spiritual meaning through Baptism, so does the land acquire a spiritual meaning by being "baptized" with a new name. Perhaps this religious name that the land acquires also enables the people to better see the Lenten symbolism in its hues.

Nevertheless, aside from this concept, which has religious overtones, Baptism takes on a secular meaning only. For Epifanio Trujillo, it is nothing more than a means to determine who will be his heir. This is why he meditates for several years before baptizing one of his offspring, comparing the waiting period with the years of training taken by a monk:

> También me motejan por el tiempo que me tomo para llevar los críos a bautizar, que es tanto como hacerlos mis herederos: yo no más pregunto cuántos años duran los frailes en el noviciado; no así como así, porque no es de enchílame la otra, voy a repartir mi nombre, mis drogas, mis pocos terrones y unos cuantos centavos que alcance a juntar (53). . .

As a result, Baptism becomes more of a tradition than a sacrament as such. This general idea of religion being a tradition rather than something spiritually beneficial is not uncommon in Latin America.

The black, forbidden nature of Matrimony in Al filo del agua has already been seen in the "Acto Preparatorio," chiefly perpetrated by Father Islas. Rarely is it viewed in any other way, except on

page 231 when Father Rosas, describing a wedding, teases Father Islas: "tocará una música de viento, luego seguirá un gran comelitón y a los ocho días habrá tornaboda, como Dios manda." This is more in line with the Old Testament concept of a wedding being a great celebration. In spite of the Old Testament Biblical atmosphere of Las tierras flacas, however, Matrimony is neither brought up in this sense nor as a sacrament. For Epifanio Trujillo, it is a completely foreign idea, unrelated to his way of life. The only one to ever convince him of the value of Matrimony was Teófila, as revealed indirectly by Epifanio himself: "¡Palabra! por ella fue la única vez que llegué a flaquear en lo tocante a casorio: allí quedé convencido de que velo y mortaja del cielo baja (58)." But again, Matrimony is not considered a sacrament as such, nor is the sacrament of Penance, except in general terms.

In Al filo del agua Penance plays a more important role. The format for going to confession reflects the way of life in the village. Before one steps into the confessional to confess his sins and receive absolution, he pauses in the pews for a few minutes and makes an examination of conscience. This is exactly what life in the village is: a constant examination of conscience. The tragedy, because normally a daily examination of conscience is a positive trait, is that scrupulosity dominates to the point where the examination of conscience turns into mere self-torture. Running consistently through the narration is a series of interrogatives which refer to a rigorous examination of conscience, as in the author's description of the spiritual exercises: "El quinto

mandamiento fué la materia de la plática moral y del examen de conciencia, ese día. ('Quién, qué, en dónde, a quién, cuántas veces, por qué, de qué manera, cuándo.') (62-63)" Later, this series of interrogatives is repeated as the men on retreat make a general confession, usually made only on special occasions such as retreats. A general confession is not a public confession made in a group, but a private review in the confessional of one's whole life, in order to receive a new perspective on where one should be going.

One of the misconceptions of the villagers which constantly crops up in the novel has to do with their emphasis on the absolute necessity of a last confession for anyone before he dies. It is brought out with regard to whether or not Timoteo Limón's wife died with confession right before her death: "('¡No, no --dice la íntima conciencia empavorecida de los que oyen y aun de la que habla--, que no nos coja sin confesar!) (134)" The implied misconception here is that the formal ritual of the sacrament of Penance makes all the difference. Receiving secondary emphasis is the question of whether the person's soul is in the state of grace at the time of his death. If so, then a last-minute confession, though highly desirable, is not essential. This is yet another manifestation of the overemphasis on the exterior aspects of the liturgy. Confession is looked upon as an "absolution machine" which functions the same regardless of the condition of the individual's soul, and completely apart from the sincerity of his intentions.

The appearances of the Blessed Virgin, the Devil, Christ, the angels and the saints in the two works serve a variety of functions according to the intentions of the author. Considering first the Blessed Virgin, note that in Las tierras flacas she is the object of special, intense devotion. Aside from its intensity, it has no other unusual characteristics. The portrayal of her character in the pastorals is uniform, in the sense that it is a representative combination of the traditional qualities she is usually considered to possess. Lacking in this novel is a heavy emphasis on the rosary, the traditional medium through which one prays to her.

On the other hand, in Al filo del agua the Blessed Virgin means different things to different people, and many individuals think of her in terms of only one particular side of her personality as the Mexican conceives it. In various parts of the novel she will represent either 1) spotless purity; 2) patriotism; 3) sorrow; 4) motherhood; or 5) conquest and triumph.

The first two attributes can best be discussed in terms of the rivalry and differences of opinion between two of the village's parish priests: Father Islas and Father Reyes. The former is the most austere of the priests when it comes to matters of self-discipline and scrupulosity, and his fanatical repression of anything and everything that might even remotely have a sexual connotation does much harm to the people of the village, particularly to Luis Gonzaga Pérez. The harshness of Father Islas is brought out in page after page of bone-chilling description. His only conception of the Blessed Virgin relates to her impeccable chastity: "Cuántos

esponsales ha impedido; a cuántos otros ha llevado dudas y remordimientos. Nada podrá convencerlo de que la virginidad no es el estado perfecto. Invariablemente habla de 'la Santísima Virgen', de 'la siempre Inmaculada y sin mancilla'; nunca la llama 'Nuestra Señora' o 'Nuestra Madre' (230). . ." Not only does Father Islas emphasize this one aspect alone of the Blessed Virgin, but he gives the people something of a misimpression of her nature. When he speaks of "la siempre Inmaculada y sin mancilla," he is referring to the Church doctrine of the Immaculate Conception. This does not allude to Mary's leading the life of a virgin, but rather her preservation from original sin. Father Islas apparently has no desire to teach this to the people as it should be taught. Instead, he simply fuses this doctrine with the doctrine of the Virgin Birth (another matter entirely), because he is so preoccupied and intent on condemning all sex, including sex within the sacrament of Matrimony.

Father Reyes is the so-called "progressive" priest of the village who is convinced that Father Islas' points of view are doing more harm than good. In attempting to combat this super-scrupulosity, Father Reyes makes few, if any, references to the purity of Mary. Instead, he stresses Our Lady of Guadalupe from time to time, and uses her as something of a patriotic symbol. She is the patron saint of Mexico, and according to the story, she appeared to Juan Diego near Mexico City in 1531, asking him to go to the bishop and plead for the construction of a church at that spot. The church was constructed, and inside is Mary's shroud with her image miraculously imprinted upon it. Today, many Mexicans make pilgrimages to the shrine in order to venerate her.

Although the primary connotation associated with Our Lady of Guadalupe is a religious one, it also implies a patriotic connotation that Father Islas wants nothing to do with. The rivalry between the two priests is manifested in the competition to have the best service on the respective feast days: ". . . ya el año pasado surgieron pequeños incidentes por el celo de dar más lucimiento a cada una de las dos funciones (305). . ." The fact that the feasts of the Immaculate Conception and of Guadalupe, on the eighth and twelfth of December respectively, fall so close together gives the people a chance to compare their relative merits. Whereas previously the feast of the Immaculate Conception always took precedence, in the novel Father Reyes gets the upper hand, winning the admiration of the people for his presentation on the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe. The most interesting thing about the whole matter is that the people are moved by the exterior aspects of the presentation, not by the basic concept which ideally motivates it, and not by the aspect of patriotism that Father Reyes stresses: "la seriedad, la inmovilidad a lo largo del trayecto y la buena caracterización del niño que hacía de Juan Diego, maravillaron al pueblo (316). . ."

The third aspect of Mary's character which is emphasized is her sorrowful aspect. Already the impact of the Stabat Mater Sequence on the psyche of the people has been shown as an example to illustrate this. It is the people of the village with personal problems who tend to look upon her as an essentially sorrowful figure, such as Bartolo Jiménez, whose daughter was originally

going to marry Damián Limón. Two nearly identical references are seen with respect to Bartolo and Our Lady of the Seven Sorrows. In these scenes, in which Bartolo feels himself to be on the verge of desperation, he subconsciously assumes the role of Mary the victim, identifying with her sorrow: "Lo que descubrió --ese día veinticuatro de agosto de mil novecientos nueve--, fué peor que si Damián le hubiera pegado siete tiros en el corazón (168)." Throughout the novel Damián has taken on the role of enemy of the Catholic faith in the minds of the people, and Bartolo serves to highlight this image:

> Fue una fiereza contenida de muchos años que de pronto estallaba, mirando a Bartolo con rencor y resentimiento, como a viejo enemigo, como a ladrón que inicua, injustamente la poseyera, como a verdugo, como a causante de la desgracia caída sobre Damián. Peor que si éste lo hubiese dejado seco, abatiéndolo con siete tiros en el corazón (274).

In contrast to, and despite, the image of the Blessed Virgin that Father Islas is always trying to convey, Marta, one of the two nieces of don Dionisio, cannot look upon her in any other way than from the motherhood aspect. This corresponds to the term that Father Islas most abhors relating to Mary: "Nuestra Señora." The reader has realized from almost the very beginning of the novel that Marta suffers from a frustrated desire to become a mother, to have a child and hold him in her arms. For her every small child, especially Pedrito, for whom she has a special fondness, is the image of the Christ child. At age twenty-seven as the novel unfolds, under the supervision of Father Martínez, she lives a

frustrating life of true martyrdom. Perhaps the situation is aggravated because she is a quiet, respectful, hermetic individual who keeps her emotions and longings to herself instead of allowing them to rise to the surface, as does María. Of all the characters who take a one-sided view of the Blessed Mother, Marta's justification for this seems to be the most reasonable, and the most understandable:

> [¿]No es rebeldía la tristeza -- como envidia del bien extraño-- que últimamente le ocasiona la vista y trato de los niños? ¿la tristeza --como miedo de morir o de pecar-- que desde abril, desde que Pedrito quedó huérfano, viene asaltándola? el rehuir con tristeza la indagación --excitante, deleitable, temerosa-- del misterio materno, hecho patronato en María Auxiliadora, la Virgen del Niño en brazos (307)?

For Marta, the taking on of Mary as the patron of her longing for motherhood represents a yearning for a goal which every girl, under certain conditions, has a right to. Marta is not motivated in the least by any base motive such as self-pity, self-rightousness, or vengeance.

The final role of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Al filo del agua is that of a conqueror, which will introduce discussion of one of the most important personalities in the novel: the Devil. He is the most dangerous and feared of all the enemies of the villagers and the priests, and in their minds perhaps the only one. Conquering the Devil is a formidable task, even an impossible one in the sense that no one in the village can hope to completely eliminate his temptations; therefore no one feels competent to fight him. This is why they resort to supernatural forces to help them in this battle. The Blessed Mother becomes a natural ally. Luis Gonzaga

Pérez certainly feels incapable of conquering the Devil all by himself, which explains his conduct on the hill when a serpent passes by him. The serpent is the time-honored symbol of the Devil, and Luis' ineptitude in fighting him is reflected by his reticence in killing this serpent. On the symbolic level, this refusal to act has its consequences, as Luis succumbs totally to the wiles of Satan. Thus, in Al filo del agua the concepts of the enemy and the Devil become virtually synonymous. Physical enemies such as federal troops represent evil, but ultimately they can all be traced to the Devil; the people feel that it is one's spiritual enemy which is to be most feared. The Devil has the capability of attacking at any moment of the day, and moments of idleness are the most dangerous. This is exemplified when Micaela's mother scolds her for lying in bed and debating as to whether or not to get up: "Nomás estás allí despierta, sin levantarte, que esa es la mejor hora del diablo para infundir malos pensamientos (90)."

The concept of don Dionisio as a Christ figure in the novel becomes clearer in juxtaposition with the Devil. When the priest has his nightmarish dream involving bizarre combinations of personalities and unknown identities, he assumes that the Devil is behind it all; the Devil thereby symbolizes temptation, and the distinction is made to the reader between actual sin, and merely the temptation to sin. Often this distinction does not make itself clear in the minds of the characters of the novel. To point out that Christ Himself was tempted by the Devil, but did not sin, accentuates it sharply. Don Dionisio does this here: "¿el Demonio?

De pronto un fogonazo ilumina su conciencia: --'¡Es el Demonio! ¡Retírate, Satanás, pues quedó escrito que no has de tener parte en mí, ni lograrás perturbarme (211)!'" Another juxtaposition of the Devil is with St. Michael, because of this saint's affinity with him as a conqueror. Since St. Michael appears often in both works, discussion of him will be postponed until the section on the angels.

If it can be said that the Devil practically assumes the stature of a character in the novel, so great is his influence in the unfolding of the plot, then the personality he acquires combines a number of personality traits garnered from different people. Luis Gonzaga Pérez and Gabriel, two of the most psychologically complex characters, show similarities at various times to the Devil, as does the extremely stern and impenetrable Father Islas. With regard to Gabriel, Yáñez is correct in stating: "tenía mucho de arcángel y mucho de demonio (188) . . ." His affinity with the archangel Gabriel, the dominant theme of his being which will be discussed later, is also combined with certain Christ-like and demonic traits which contribute to his complexity.

In both novels the Devil is associated with evil, but in each of the two novels the concept of evil is taken in a different sense. In Al filo del agua evil refers not merely to the bad results of temptation, but also to temptation itself. And evil, being thus taken completely on the spiritual level, does not crystallize into anything tangible that can be measured, at least not in terms of physical quantity.

This is not the case in Las tierras flacas. In addition to the treatment he receives in Al filo del agua, here the people associate the Devil many times with progress: things like weather vanes, electricity and airplanes. The idea that change is to be resisted and should be avoided is shown not only in the people's aversion to the coming of electricity, but in the very structure of the novel. From the beginning, the Old Testament Biblical atmosphere labels the region as antiquated with regard to material progress. Thousands of years passed in the Old Testament without any material progress being made. The implication is, therefore, that progress is also foreign to the Tierra Santa. When progress does arrive, the people associate it with the Devil; actually, it might be considered to parallel the coming of Christ, who changed the way of life of the Old Testament people, just as electricity will change the way of life in this region.

The airplane becomes the most evident symbol of the Devil in Las tierras flacas, as it flies over the region for the first time, startling the natives. The Blessed Virgin is not called upon to conquer him, but extensive use is made of symbolic signs and sacramentals to ward him off, such as making crosses in the air; the airplane passes so quickly that one man states: "ni tiempo hubo de sacar agua y velas benditas que hay en algunas casas, a prevención (81)."

In summary, the Devil in Al filo del agua symbolizes temptation, plays the role in a foil to the Christ-like personality of the

parish priest, and is incarnated partially in several of the novel's characters. In Las tierras flacas, he symbolizes progress in the region, and highlights some of the superstitions of the region's inhabitants.

Several times in both works, various characters exhibit characteristics which give them a certain affinity with Jesus Christ, but only on occasion. Nowhere is the concept of Christ more evident than in the personality of don Dionisio. He represents Christ in the village as its pastor; but more than that, his actions and intentions conform consistently with those of the God-man, rather than merely reminding the reader of Him once in a while.

Among the references which link don Dionisio with Christ is the author's statement that in the confessional the parish priest "se transfigura (42)," an obvious association with Christ's transfiguration before Peter, James and John.[30] This provides an example of an exaggeration on the part of Yáñez, as seen from the people's point of view, conceivably for the purpose of graphically bringing this comparison to the reader's attention to prepare him for other parallels to come. In a similar fashion, don Dionisio is said to have sweated blood, as did Christ in His agony in the garden: "No podía ser sino sangre lo que sudaba don Dionisio en aquellos momentos (211)." Whether or not he really did sweat blood in this case is secondary to the purpose of the passage, that of establishing don Dionisio forcefully in the reader's mind as an extraordinarily concerned, saintly, yet tortured figure. This agony receives the greatest emphasis of all the attributes of the priest,

especially the concern he suffers for his fellow man, paralleling Christ's concern for the human race. For example, just as don Dionisio prays for his assistant priests after supper during Retreat (69), so Christ prayed for His Apostles after the Last Supper. A few pages later, Yáñez characterizes him as John characterizes Christ in his Gospel: "Como hubiese amado a los suyos, que vivían en el mundo, los amó hasta el fin (101)."[31] This accentuates the love, humility and dedication of the man.

Don Dionisio's model of imitation is Christ Himself, and as a result he often finds himself abiding rigidly by the example set forth by Christ as a standard and guide to his own conduct. In the same nightmare referred to previously, he confuses the identity of María and Marta, and momentarily lacks Christian charity:

> Don Dionisio la mira como Cristo a los mercaderes venidos al templo. Era tal aquella mirada, que la mujer, entre gritos, articuló estas palabras: --"¡Lo quise! ¡Lo quiero todavía! Yo soy la culpable. ¡Fué por mi gusto!" Enloquecido, sin control, don Dionisio lanza puntapiés a la pecadora. --"Nuestro Señor no trató así a María Magdalena, ni siquiera a la mujer adúltera (212)."

When Christ lost His temper with the money-changers in the temple,[32] this was considered to be a just anger on His part. Thus by extension don Dionisio's anger might be considered the same. The difference is that don Dionisio feels anguish created by the fact that he is not sure if his anger in this case is justified or not. The example of Christ shames him, and remembering how Mary Magdalene and the adulterous woman were treated, his torture is increased by his own constant self-examination and self-doubt.

It would perhaps be valuable to examine briefly the similarities and differences between don Dionisio and one of the most famous Christ-like figures of the twentieth century novel in Spain, Don Manuel of Miguel de Unamuno's San Manuel Bueno, mártir. The similarities are many. Both priests have as their only concern the welfare of their village parishoners. Both are highly influential in the thought processes of the people under their care. Both men fight themselves: don Dionisio is tortured by scruples relating to the question of whether or not he has done his best, and Don Manuel suffers because of his own lack of ability to grasp intellectually, and thereby believe in, the concept of life after death.

The fact that the situations of the two priests are not dissimiliar is indicated by various direct points of comparison in the two novels. Both have a very emotional people as parishoners, people who are more than willing to attribute otherwise explainable phenomena to miracles. The people's claim in Al filo del agua that once on Good Friday a statue of the Blessed Virgin sweat blood (82) is similar to the belief of the people of Valverde de Lucerna that the statue of Our Lady of the Seven Sorrows had called out "¡hijo mío!" to Don Manuel.[33] Actually, it was Don Manuel's own mother who had physically exclaimed this in church.

Both priests are unable on a given occasion to distribute communion, and they faint: "Don Dionisio se levantó, dijo misa; pero no pudo cumplir el deseo de llevar la comunión, por el pueblo, a todos los enfermos; casi se había desvanecido al fin del Sacrificio (163-64). . ." The same thing happened with Don Manuel as he attempted to give Lázaro his first communion:

> Cuando llegó la vez a mi hermano pude ver que Don Manuel, tan blanco como la nieve de enero en la montaña y temblando como tiembla el lago . . . se le acercó con la sagrada forma en la mano, y de tal modo le temblaba ésta al arrimarla a la boca de Lázaro que se le cayó la forma a tiempo que le daba un vahido.[34]

The personal suffering endured by the two men gives them a dark, shadowy perspective of gloom and tragedy. Also, both meditate on self-mortification, and are "martyrs" who suffer for a cause, as did Christ. Don Dionisio is a martyr because at the end of the novel he accepts all blame for what had happened; by saying Mass in spite of everything, he gives the people something familiar to fall back on and absorbs the spiritual defeat all by himself. Much of the compassion, evident in the tone of the novel, that Yáñez reveals is concentrated in his development of don Dionisio: "In effect, Yáñez views the authenticity of his character's Catholicism with compassion, even as he penetrates the weaknesses of its psychological underpinnings. As the novel runs its course, Don Dionisio emerges as a genuine martyr, driving with every fiber of his being to achieve the impossible: to reverse the thrusts of history and human nature. In the end he is broken."[35] Don Manuel was also concerned for the people's happiness, because though he could not believe, he sacrificed himself by dedicating his life to the happiness of the temporal lives of the villagers.

In their similarities, these Christ figures reflect above all the suffering of the Redeemer of mankind, as opposed to His more tranquil moments. Upon analyzing the differences between the two men, it is seen that don Dionisio is a more faithful representation

of Christ overall. Whereas both are concerned for the well-being of their parishoners, each has a different concept of the word. For don Dionisio, "well-being" means faithful adherence to Catholic precepts; for Don Manuel it means ignorance of these precepts, in order that the people not lose their faith by thinking too much about intellectual concepts. For don Dionisio many things are sinful; for Don Manuel almost nothing is sinful, except gossiping, and above all, the mere fact of having been born. For don Dionisio the Devil is a figure whose danger looms above that of all other existing things; for Don Manuel, the Devil doesn't really exist, as is revealed in one of the conversations between Don Manuel and Angela Carballino.[36]

All of this adds up to an extremely close comparison, and an extensive one, between don Dionisio and Christ. It contributes toward making the reader admire the parish priest more than any other character in the novel. This is largely because of the sincerity evident in don Dionisio's thoughts and actions, the temptation and anguish he endures, and his complete lack of concern for himself over others.

Two other characters are compared with Christ in Al filo del agua: Luis Gonzaga Pérez and Gabriel. As has already been noted, Luis assumes the role of Christ in the Good Friday scene on the hill outside the village. Vestiges of this bitter, egotistical Christ appear later, on Holy Saturday, as Luis divides his time between imagining himself as Christ and as a priest. He envisions his entering into death as a priest with sacramentals, vestments,

etc.: "Hubiera entrado a la muerte con capa morada, y cruz, y ciriales, y cirio, y caña e incensario (146) . . ." Another association with Christ consists in Luis' comparison of the five stars of the Paschal candle with the five wounds of Our Lord; he sees the Paschal candle as the image of Christ. Thus Luis compares himself with Christ through the functions of the priest. Since the priest is Christ's representative here on earth, this is a natural association. The same thing occurs in Las tierras flacas with Matiana. She becomes a substitute for the priest that the region does not have. In fact, the powers attributed to her by the people extend well beyond those of an ordinary priest, approaching those of a supernatural being.

When Gabriel confronts Victoria, he experiences pain which reminds the reader of Christ's agony in the garden: "Rojo el rostro, estaba por sudar sangre (190)." Gabriel feels death coming on just as Christ did in Gethsemani: "Es la muerte, la muerte que llega (191)." The comparison is brief, however, for the main parallel the author wishes to establish is between Gabriel and his Biblical namesake, the archangel.

Although the discussion of the angels in this section must inevitably touch to a degree on the Bible, as much attention as possible will be directed to the function and significance of angels in the novels. In this context "angel" will mean messenger of God, and will therefore exclude devils. In both novels the angels are primarily figures of glorious triumph. In Al filo del agua Gabriel, if for no other reason, is likened to the archangel

because he eventually triumphs over the restrictions of the village by leaving, and triumphs in his encounter with Victoria where Luis Gonzaga Pérez fails. Porfirio Sánchez analyzes Gabriel's triumph:

> Gabriel cierra los ojos y se desploma . . . Momentaneamente parece que tenemos aquí una repetición de lo que le pasó a Luis. Pero, del desmayo no sale el adolescente, sino el "arcángel magnífico." Ya no era, "el dulce nuncio del misterio, con la azucena en la mano," sino "el arcángel de fuego a la puerta del paraíso . . ."[37]

This also implies a gradual maturing process working within Gabriel. Although the angel of the Annunciation is not necessarily inferior to the angel of triumph, the people of the village view it in this way. First, just as the angel Gabriel was a messenger, Yáñez mentions this function of Gabriel. He is a messenger in the sense that he opens each day by ringing the bells, thereby sounding new hope for everyone. Gabriel is the archangel of life, having announced the birthdays of John the Baptist and Christ.[38] However, the role of Gabriel in the novel goes beyond that, since the ringing of the bells can mean different things at different times. This dual nature of Gabriel is reflected in the scene where the funeral of Timoteo Limon's wife is postponed from Easter Sunday to Easter Monday. The author points out this contrast between life (Easter Sunday) and death (Easter Monday) as it pertains to Gabriel:

> ¿Quién era el ministro, el artista ministro, que ayer, nomás, y antier, cantaba el himno del mundo a la Resurrección, y ahora, ministro de la muerte, a través de la muerte, desahuciaba las alegrías del mundo? Nervios ultraterrenos habría: Manos y corazón de arcángel. De los arcángeles funestos. Nervios terribles. Como el arcángel de la expulsión paradisíaca.

> Como el exterminador de los primogénitos egipcios. Como la teoría de los arcángeles apocalípticos. Como los cuatro jinetes arcangélicos que purifican el mundo antes del fin. (Mañana del terrible juicio esa mañana de Pascua en que las campanas no cesaron de tocar a muerto.) (184)

These "arcángeles funestos" are one more manifestation of the spirit of death and fear that hangs over the village. Wishing to again present this aspect of village life, while at the same time wishing to preserve a celestial air about Gabriel, the author extends Gabriel's role beyond that of his Biblical namesake to encompass all the functions of the archangel. The full extent of this role will be discussed in the next chapter.

Two other elements contribute toward placing Gabriel above the rest of the villagers: the bell tower and Gabriel's mysterious origin. The bell tower continues this symbolism on a physical plane. It symbolizes heaven, also considered to be a lofty place; and Gabriel spends much of his time there, just as the angels spend much of their time in heaven. Since the angels have no terrestrial origin, the fact that Gabriel's origin is a mystery plays a part in lending a celestial air to his person. For him to have come from a specific place on earth would have hurt the angelic comparison.

The other angelic figure of triumph in Al filo del agua, this time triumph in battle, is St. Michael. Appropriately, he appears in two references toward the end of the novel, when everyone realizes that disaster is imminent. Since the people of the village can only think of the enemy in terms of the Devil, they can do nothing but call on St. Michael to defend them. Lucas Macías, pondering the

fence-straddling position of Román Capistrán, couches the Revolution in terms of this spiritual battle: "¿Expondría sus bienes? ¿También se levantaría para vengar su destitución? ¿O era un ladino que al oler la revolufia le prendía una vela al diablo y otra a San Miguel (375)?" A few pages later, the Daughters of Mary consider the consequences of the invasion by the troops: "--¿Respetarán la medalla de la Virgen? Por lo menos la respetarán. Bajarían San Miguel y sus ángeles para obligarlos al respeto--inocentes arbitrios de las Hijas de María Inmaculada (379)." This last comment by the author indicates that St. Michael will be doomed to failure, because the only possible triumph in Al filo del agua can be one involving change. Gabriel triumphs because he succeeds in changing the direction of his life.

St. Michael enters far more significantly into Las tierras flacas. Epifanio Trujillo's son, Miguel Arcángel, alias Jacob Gallo, combines various character traits. As a symbol of St. Michael, he triumphs through the eyes of the people on both an earthly and spiritual plane. In accordance with St. Michael, his image is that of a warrior, leader and helper to those in need. The people look upon him as almost a supernatural character, since he apparently has the power to challenge Epifanio. No poor farmer of the Tierra Santa would have believed this to be possible, and yet Miguel's dreams slowly become reality as the novel progresses. Just as St. Michael assists in the liberation of Israel,[39] so the Miguel Arcángel of the novel liberates and assists the people of the region by bringing electricity and other things. Taken in the

sense of "light," perhaps electricity symbolizes the enlightenment of the Tierra Santa, which has finally adjusted to the outside world. Therefore, it is seen that St. Michael triumphs in Las tierras flacas where he fails in Al filo del agua. This victory is inevitable, because St. Michael is invoked to right a wrong, whereas in Al filo del agua his defeat is inevitable because the people call upon him to preserve an unhealthy situation.

As in Al filo del agua, St. Michael is constantly juxtaposed with the Devil in Las tierras flacas. Miguel Arcángel's return to the Tierra Santa coincides with the appearance of the "Devil" in the form of an airplane. When Merced informs Rómulo of these two arrivals, the first juxtaposition occurs:

> No me gusta que se haya cambiado de nombre, pero sí de apellido. No lo reconocí. A fuerza de pelos y señales que no dejaban lugar a duda, comencé a creerlo. El primero que llegó con el cuento del Diablo. ¿Dónde te tocó verlo?
> --¿Al arcángel?
> --No, al Diablo. (110-11)

Merced is delighted with Miguel Arcángel's arrival: "Qué bueno que haya llegado el que se les aparezca como San Miguel al Diablo (114)." She sees it as an arrangement between Teófila and God. Rómulo, however, is extremely skeptical of her explanation. Despite his lack of education, he is a thinking man, and does not surrender himself to the easy explanation that nearly everyone else accepts. Nevertheless, later on the author confirms and maintains this juxtaposition of St. Michael and the Devil, except that the Devil, rather than being associated with the airplane, is now linked with

the Trujillo family: "Había quedado en pie una lucha no sólo entre cuñas del mismo palo --Adán, Caín y Abel--, sino entre dos modos distintos de ver el futuro de la tierra--San Miguel o Luzbel (198) . . ." Here the Devil switches roles; no longer is he associated with progress, but rather with the forces that hinder it by opposing the proposed reforms of Miguel Arcángel.

Another way that the people in Las tierras flacas view angels has to do with their symbolizing innocence and purity. This pertains especially to the picture painted of Teófila, whom everyone, including Epifanio, considers to be a saint. When Teófila begins working with the newly-acquired sewing machine, her smile is "igual a la que les pintan a los ángeles (61) . . ." In this capacity, angels and saints serve the same function, reflecting the same qualities. Epifanio merges the two concepts when he relates how he suggested that Teófila be "buried as an angel": "Fue mío el empeño de que la enterraran como angelito. Les extrañó que la idea saliera de mí, que siempre motejo la costumbre. --No sólo ángel; Teófila es una santa, hecha y derecha --les decía yo (72)." It is also curious that in Epifanio's personal hierarchy, saints rank above angels. Perhaps this can best be explained by determining just what constitutes a saint in the two works, and what the functions of the saints are.

Manuel Altolaguirre states the following with regard to Al filo del agua: "Qué sabiduría eclesiástica tienen los amargos brochazos con que describe a los curas del pueblo. Todos santos. Ninguno de ellos caracterizados. Qué saludable horror a la santidad nos

inspira esta obra tan demoniaca, a veces tan angélica."[40] He feels this way because, in general, the novel debases the image of the saint in heaven through negative comments by Father Islas and the villagers. For them a saint is an individual of high moral character, but who sets out and succeeds in suffocating the joy of life in himself and in others. Of course, the lives of many saints on the Church calendar do not conform to this rigid definition. Often such saints are criticized, or else they are associated only with the idea of mourning or foreboding. One example of this is the appearance of St. Paschal Baylon in the thoughts of Timoteo Limón, as the latter remembers hearing the bells toll on St. Paschal's feast day and interprets that as a sign that he is about to die. St. Paschal died on May 17, 1592, having foretold his death exactly a year before. Timoteo's constant fears have apparently led him to the pretentious thought that he has endured his sufferings in the manner of a saint, and consequently God has seen fit to reveal to him that he would soon die. Micaela, among others, laughs at this idea: "'Ni que fuera un santo para que le avisaran cuándo se va a morir. ¡Viejo chocho (261)!'" This sense of foreboding persists throughout the novel, and eventually comes to signal the death of the village as a whole: "¡Eh! yo ya soy más del otro mundo que de éste; mi corazón me avisa que voy a morirme apenas en el filo del agua, pero ésta sí va a ser tormenta, les anuncio (376)."

Like St. Paschal Baylon, St. Bartholomew and St. Raymund Nonnatus are, relatively speaking, lesser known saints. The feast

day of St. Bartholomew falls on August 24th, and the people of the village refer to it as "el tremendo día de San Bartolomé (263)." In addition to its being in the terribly hot month of August, perhaps it is considered so terrible because the apostle Bartholomew was flayed alive. In any case, the people traditionally associate this day with all sorts of tragic occurrences. This is ironic in view of the fact that Christ described Bartholomew as "a true Israelite in whom there is no guile!"[41] Even the author subtly associates saints with tragedy from time to time. When Damián is led away after his crime, the group passes by a place called La Labor de San Ramón (277). St. Raymund dedicated his life to ransoming captives in Africa, and eventually became a captive himself. Perhaps the implication is that Damián is sacrificing himself as a victim of the unhealthy atmosphere of the village, but ironically is considered an evil man rather than a martyr.

In addition, even more well-known saints who are almost always linked with pure goodness are presented in Al filo del agua as having a bad side. St. Joseph offers a prime example. Timoteo Limón prays to St. Joseph as the "patrono de la Buena Muerte," and in the spiritual exercises he is referred to as the "Castísimo Patriarca Señor San José (55)." This is the traditional conception of Joseph held by the average Catholic. He is universally admired because of his chastity and self-restraint, preserving the virginity of Mary, his spouse, in order that the divine plan of God be carried out. Yet Father Islas, incredibly, disdains him and discourages devotion to him:

> Cierto es que nunca el Padre Islas ha celebrado misa en la capilla de la Sagrada Familia; su poca devoción al Patriarca es manifiesta, no lo menciona en sus sermones y se le han escapado expresiones desdeñosas para el rezo de los Siete Domingos con que suele pedirse a San José lo que mejor convenga en cuestiones de proyectos matrimoniales; desdén extensivo y ostensible para el ejercicio de posadas y singularmente para la procesión con los Peregrinos. -"Esto huele a profanidad"-- dicen que ha dicho en asambleas de la Asociación. Visible disgusto externa cuando alguien se atreve a invitarlo para que vea un Nacimiento, en los días de Noche Buena, costumbre que ha ido desterrándose del pueblo, en buena parte por agencias del Padre. San Antonio es también objeto de sus antipatías: notoria consecuencia, la escasez creciente de fieles que hacen los martes al santo de Padua, y el poco brillo de su novena y fiesta (230-31).

Thus Father Islas makes yet another distortion of the facts, this time twisting around the true image of St. Joseph in order to reinforce his own point of view. In light of Islas' mania for virginity as the ideal way of life, he dislikes St. Joseph simply because the latter was the marriage partner of the Virgin Mary. Islas' contempt for St. Anthony, to whom one traditionally prays if he wishes to recover a lost article, is a bit more difficult to understand. Perhaps Father Islas feels that such prayers are motivated by excessive attachment to material goods, and that this, too, "huele a profanidad."

About the only saints who are looked up to in the novel are those generally associated with the intellect, among them St. Augustine, St. Thomas Aquinas and St. Paul. Often the tendency is for one to remember these men for their roles in defining and preserving Catholic dogma, with the result that their human qualities are obscured. This is most striking in the case of St. Augustine,

whose immoral youth has been totally overshadowed by his later intellectual triumphs. Thus for the people he falls into a special category; they think of him not as a man of flesh and blood, but as an intellectual concept. Therefore the deeds of his life, unknown to the people, cannot contradict the rigid rules of conduct endorsed by Father Islas.

St. Paul, on the other hand, holds a unique position among the saints. Like St. Augustine, he led a dissolute youth, and his failings are much more widely known. But St. Paul has been presented as a charismatic figure throughout Church history, and not even Father Islas dares to undermine the reputation that this saint has established through the centuries. The charisma attached to him is reflected in the thought process of Merceditas Toledo as she tries to rid herself of temptation in the form of a boy, Julián: ". . . si era preciso, cegaría, tomando al pie de la letra el consejo de San Pablo (32)." Actually, it is the advice of Christ in the Sermon on the Mount: "So if the right eye is an occasion of sin to thee, pluck it out and cast it from thee . . ."[42] This is the "advice" Merceditas decides to follow, and her attributing it to St. Paul comes from the tendency to attribute all wisdom and teaching to him when in doubt. Something similar appears in Paul's epistle to the Galatians, but it is a conditional statement not to be construed as advice: "For I bear you witness that, if possible, you would have plucked out your very eyes and given them to me."[43]

Thus the conception that the people of the village hold as to what constitutes a saint remains intact through most of the novel,

and is embodied in the person of Father Islas. But true to the novel's pattern, the ideals of the villagers must inevitably be shattered in the end. Accordingly, Father Islas suffers a nervous breakdown, and the people are disillusioned: "El ataque había matado la fe popular en la santidad del padre director (360)."

In Las tierras flacas, as already noted, the distinction between saints and angels is unclear in the people's minds; both concepts are personified in their memory of Teófila. Epifanio, however, prefers to think of her as a saint, and thereby makes the distinction between saints and angels. For Epifanio, the term "angel" is a nebulous concept that cannot be concretized, and therefore has little meaning for him. He visualizes angels as beings who inherit a high place in heaven through little merit of their own. He has nothing but disdain for them, and the people resent this: "lo que directamente ofendía el sentimiento lugareño era la incredulidad, chorreando a grito abierto, a llanto desaforado, contra la fe de que los niños muertos son almas en gracia, escogidas por Dios, llevadas derecho al cielo, hechas angelitos con alas, diademas y túnica (50)."

On the other hand, for Epifanio a saint is someone who merits a high place in heaven through outstanding efforts on earth. This is how he thinks of Teófila on a spiritual plane. Basically, however, he has a natural, not supernatural, concept of a "saint." The names he chooses for his children are from a book on the lives of the saints. Only when the offspring lives up to the name chosen for him, through earthly deeds meritorious in the eyes of Epifanio,

is he rewarded with Baptism, which, on the natural level, means a share of Epifanio's will.

For the people, too, a saint is a man of action. Many times they think of a saint solely in terms of some earthly function, as if each saint were given a job to do by God to help and protect the faithful on earth. For example, St. Barbara appears twice in the novel juxtaposed against lightning. The people want Matiana to tell them when the various saints' feast days occur, not in order to venerate the saints and concentrate on emulating their example, but rather to receive something from them. This is seen in connection with Sts. Blaise, John, Anthony and Joseph in a passage already quoted in this dissertation (p. 67). A similar succession of saints, together with their associations, appears in the description of Matiana's house (147). This very personal concept of a saint has them working hand in hand with the people on earth. By taking part in the lives of the people, they become terrestrial as well as celestial; this parallels the general notion that in Las tierras flacas the religion of the people does not merely look to the next world, but also plays a role in bettering this world.

Whereas this attitude toward the saints is not wholly admirable, it is an improvement over the negative concept held by the villagers in Al filo del agua. In Las tierras flacas, the negative implication of "el día de San Bartolomé" receives less emphasis than in Al filo del agua. St. Joseph also has a different image from the one presented in Al filo del agua. In Las tierras flacas he is presented in the traditional positive light: "El vuelo de las golondrinas

que llegaron o llegarán el día de San José, y apresuradamente construyen sus nidos en resquicios caseros. ¡Las golondrinas ventureras, remedieras! ¡El día de San José! ¡San José: verde, amarillo y milagroso: azucena en la mano, según su imagen y semejanza (241) . . ." Teófila, above all, is the "saint" who dominates the novel. In one way or another, she conforms to everyone's concept of a saint, even Epifanio's. As already noted, Epifanio holds an egocentric definition of the word, thinking of saints as people who do something for him. Thus, according to his way of thinking, his saints are to him as religious saints are to God. Although he doubts the existence of saints in heaven, it is evident that Teófila's holiness has made a great impression upon him, and he makes a concession: "Si hay santas en el cielo, Teófila es una de ellas: ni duda cabe (71)."

Epifanio thinks of Teófila as both saint and martyr. The real reason for this reverts back to Epifanio himself. He is convinced that "Teófila ofreció su vida por sacarme de atolladeros (281)." As might be expected, he thinks of her in terms of what she did for him, and he considers her a martyr because she died for him.

As is the case with the other saints, the people associate Teófila with an earthly function. They think of her as a saint and martyr in terms of her helping them assert their independence from Epifanio. Only Merced thinks of her death in religious terms, erroneously believing that Teófila died because of Merced's sins. When Teófila died, Merced "gritaba y se retorcía como condenada, implorando la muerte, por ser ella la única culpable de que Dios les mandara semejante castigo (83)."

Thus in both novels the overall aspects of the saints mentioned are not portrayed. In Al filo del agua their negative aspects are emphasized, and in Las tierras flacas their traditional earthly functions dominate their presentation. As for Father Islas and Teófila, it is ironic that Father Islas turns out to be less of a saint than he appeared to be, whereas the people of Las tierras flacas merely scratch the surface in realizing Teófila's saintly qualities.

The Miserere and the De Profundis in Al filo del agua have already been discussed, and the Acto Preparatorio has been described as having the quality of a litany. Litanies appear elsewhere as well, along with other prayers which serve a variety of purposes. In general terms, prayer is associated with discipline, piety, and sadness.

Yáñez refers to the rosary around the waist of don Dionisio as "la disciplina (40)." This underlines the notion that discipline is essential if one is to combat the forces of the Devil, and consistent daily prayer is highly recommended for establishing self-discipline. Don Dionisio says his fifteen mysteries of the rosary daily, and so do others. For some individuals, one unfortunate consequence of this is that the tendency arises to equate the mere mechanical act of praying with genuine piety. Timoteo Limón convinces himself that he is a pious individual as long as he prays: "un esfuerzo de la conciencia redujo a los pensamientos en fuga y el piadoso ejercicio continuó (15) . . ." Luis Gonzaga Pérez recites words from the Apostles' Creed in desperation on the hill (121),

and Gabriel does the same thing with the Hail Mary to remove temptation (207). And when all else fails in his discussion with Damián, don Dionisio asks him to pray even though it may be meaningless to him: "Cuando ahora o mañana o más tarde te acuerdes de alguna oración, rézala, no vayas a desecharla. Dila con los labios, aunque no la sientas (272)."

The connection between prayer and sadness is also established. The only mysteries of the rosary said during the spiritual exercises are the sorrowful mysteries (58). The church bells become a prayer after Damián's heinous crime: "ha ordenado que doblen las campanas en miserere colectivo (270) . . ." The litany appears several times in the text, and it always creates an atmosphere of sorrow. This is especially evident in the chapter entitled "Marta y María." Yáñez closes this chapter with a litany-like description of Marta, which is appropriate because of the sad, frustrated life she leads: "Marta veneranda, Marta fiel, Marta laudable, Marta espiritual, Marta de verdadera devoción, Marta mística, Marta de marfil, Marta de la alianza, Marta del cielo, Marta de los enfermos, Marta de los afligidos, Marta del buen consejo, Marta entristecida por confusa inquietud (79-80)."

At times prayers serve other miscellaneous functions. When they casually appear in the author's narration or in the dialogue, they maintain the religious atmosphere of the novel. Two examples are when Yáñez speaks about the poor, "los que hoy se levantarán sin el pan de cada día (39)," and when don Anselmo expresses the desire, in the form of a litany, to be free of northern influence:

"De los norteños, ¡líbranos, Señor (87)!" At times this device achieves an ironic effect. For example, the imminent death of Leonardo Tovar's wife is juxtaposed with the opening line of the Angelus: "--El Angel del Señor anunció a María (25) . . ." The Angelus joyously announces the birth of Christ and the beginning of a new world; in contrast, Leonardo Tovar's world for all practical purposes is about to end.

Prayer words and phrases are liberally sprinkled through the text of Las tierras flacas. Primarily, as noted, they contribute to the novel's religious atmosphere. In addition to the numerous examples of prayers used as greetings and as farewells, parts of the Salve Regina (57), the Apostles' Creed (p. 85: "Matiana desciende a los infiernos . . ."), and the Our Father (298-99) weave in and out of the narration in a natural, spontaneous way. Throughout the novel, the act of praying is not stilted or ritualistic, but simple, straightforward and sincere. Perhaps part of the reason is that there are no chapels or priests in the Tierra Santa; as a result, the people are more on their own, and think more in terms of praying directly to God. The relative spontaneity of prayer in Las tierras flacas makes it sincere; it is not likely to become a mechanical ritual, as sometimes happens in Al filo del agua.

Epifanio expresses the view that one doesn't need to go to a specific place to pray: "para rezar basta el jacal, y mejor es el cièlo raso porque nada estorba el rezo (56) . . ." Later on he reemphasizes this, as already noted on page 64 above. Unfortunately, he uses this idea as a pretext to justify his anticlericalism, and

to explain his failure to have a chapel constructed in the region. Nevertheless, this concept of prayer is in tune with the atmosphere of the novel, and is worth thinking about, since prayer should be humble, and should result in meditation about God.

Only once in the novel is prayer associated extensively with death. This happens in the chapter entitled "Las nubes, las nubes." It begins with the people praying fruitlessly for rain and leads into the death of Epifanio Trujillo; it examines the purpose and the effect of prayer, which toward the end of the chapter is juxtaposed against the concept of progress.

As the chapter begins, it is suggested that the prayers of the people for rain are useless in themselves. When the recitation of the "Holy, Holy, Holy" antiphon brings no apparent weather change, Merced adds the Magnificat and the Litany of the Saints. These two prayers are considered to be especially powerful, and the Magnificat, in particular, is called upon by the people to remedy a desperate or nearly impossible situation. One of the lines in the Magnificat tells how the Lord has done great and marvelous things. The first time this line appears is when Merced tells Rómulo that "the Devil" (in the form of an airplane) has come through Teófila's intervention to finish off the Trujillos: "--Allí tienes patente la señal del milagro, al permitirle Dios que volara por el Llano para anunciarnos cosas grandes y maravillosas como dice la Magnífica (114)." This establishes the association between the Magnificat and the downfall of Epifanio, which for some would be a great and marvelous thing. When the Magnificat reappears in

the aforementioned chapter, the reader senses that Epifanio is soon to die: "Glorifica mi alma al Señor y mi espíritu se llena de gozo . . . pues ha hecho cosas grandes y maravillosas (265) . . ." Ironically, when he dies, the rains come, and the notion that Epifanio is to blame for everything bad that befalls the region is confirmed. Again, words from the Magnificat appear:

> La muerte de don Epifanio fue rápida, sin dar tiempo a que pudieran hacérsele luchas.
>
> Pareció que para reventar, las nubes aguardaban que rindiera su juicio particular el difunto.
>
> ¡Qué señora tormenta cayó! --Mi espíritu se llena de gozo. Con estruendo de rayos. --Pues ha hecho en mi favor cosas grandes y maravillosas el que es Todopoderoso (272).

Yáñez breaks the news of Epifanio's death without the reader being forewarned, except by the appearances of the Magnificat and the Litany of the Saints. Litanies appear infrequently in Las tierras flacas, but they serve the same function as in Al filo del agua, that of alluding to sorrow and death. The litany appears once more in the following chapter, in the bedroom of the dead man, as the people ask the saints to pray for him: "Ruega por él Ruega por él Ruega por él Ruega por él (280) . . ." The people in Las tierras flacas do not take a masochistic joy in such prayers, as sometimes appears to be the case in Al filo del agua. Rómulo, for one, reacts negatively to death prayers: "--Se me enchina el cuerpo de acordarme, de representarme el sonsonete del rezo cuando las calamidades, las agonías, los rosarios en que acostumbran seguirse juntando los parientes y las amistades del difunto las noches que siguen al día del entierro (266)." This does not, however, detract

from the sincerity of those who pray, as Rómulo makes clear in speaking about his grandfather: "Mi abuelo era muy cumplido en acompañar a los vecinos cuando sus duelos; no era muy rezador; pero en esos casos lo hacía con gusto, hincado todo el rosario, los brazos en cruz cuando la letanía (266) . . ."

The other important consideration in "Las nubes, las nubes" is the apparent opposition between prayer and progress. After prayers fail to bring rain, it is surmised that they will be worth nothing as long as the Gallos remain in the Tierra Santa with their doctrine of progress. Nevertheless, "por sí o por no, aumentaron en los ranchos los rezos del Trisagio, la Magnífica, las Letanías de Todos los Santos (271) . . ." Thus, when the rains come, some attribute it to prayer, and others point to the accuracy of Jacob Gallo's (Miguel Arcángel's) predictions based on scientific data. It is assumed by the inhabitants of the region that prayer and progress must be mutually exclusive, in accordance with the people's opposition to change. Only Jacob Gallo realizes that they can work together in harmony for the same end: "No tampoco es incrédulo en cuestión de rezadas; pero no cree que sirvan solas, y hasta dice que son pretexto y refugio de flojos, repitiendo el dicho bien sabido de que los credos son buenos para espantar a bestias dañinas; pero acompañados de pedradas y palos (270)."

Thus, the concept of prayer in Las tierras flacas reinforces the Old Testament atmosphere in several ways. It emphasizes simple, direct communication between man and God. It is regarded as having great power, and appears as an omen to portend things to come. And it is, in the minds of the people, an opposing force to progress and change.

Many traditional ideas associated with the Church are reflected in the two novels, some valid, some erroneous. Those that probably stand out most are: 1) the importance of a religious vocation; 2) the importance of form in the liturgy and religious practices, and the necessity to concretize religion; 3) the tendency for the individual to leave everything to God; and 4) the importance of the next world.

Although perhaps no longer quite as true in this age of declining religious vocations, the progress of a Catholic child often used to be judged in terms of how good a priest or nun he or she might make. The religious vocation was always considered substantially superior to non-religious celibacy or marriage, in that order. One's highest aspiration was to be to the priesthood or sisterhood. If one failed to measure up to these standards, one might try to live a chaste, single life, although this was admitted to be difficult. Marriage was for those who were too weak to resist the temptations that go along with the other two vocations.

This general concept is bizarrely distorted and exaggerated in Al filo del agua. The low prestige of marriage in the eyes of the villagers has already been noted; in contrast, the religious vocation occupies an excessively high position of prestige. Few people can live up to what is expected of a seminarian or novitiate, least of all someone like Micaela. Her mother, reflecting the vocational scale of values of the villagers, resigns herself to the fact that Micaela must marry: "Micaela, es evidente, no tiene

vocación para religiosa y sus arrebatos le harían peligrosa soltera; debe casarse (36) . . ." Even those who do appear to have a religious vocation are a constant source of worry to don Dionisio when they return to the village on vacation, so great is the importance attached to their becoming priests. And the girls who are attracted to seminarians suffer from an excessive guilt complex:

> Este año, ¿cuántas comenzarán la incierta espera, cuyas espinas agudiza el remordimiento de jugar contra Dios, escamoteándole un operario de su viña? Remordimiento de no dormir en todo el año, en muchos años. Angustias de recibir y de no recibir cartas del ausente.
>
> ¡Cuántos vendrán con la resolución de cortar la carrera y echarán sal de lágrimas en la esperanza del Cura, en las esperanzas del padre, y de la madre, y de la parentela, que soñaron ennoblecer la estirpe con un ministro del Altísimo! ¡Cuántos otros echarán este año la primera simiente de su desahucio! Multi sunt vocati et pauca electi (279).

The importance of the religious vocation, blown out of proportion in Al filo del agua, is barely even alluded to in Las tierras flacas, again because priests and nuns are unknown in the Tierra Santa. Thus, with no example to emulate, aspiration to the priesthood is foreign to its inhabitants. However, at one point Epifanio remarks that after Teófila caught smallpox, "Merced ya estaba consolándose con que mejor que se la lleve Dios que cualquier gavilán dañino (59)." Merced thinks of God as Teófila's husband, which is the concept usually applied to a nun. This suggests that in a different environment Teófila and other young people, influenced by this same mentality regarding vocations and under community pressure, might have entered the religious life.

The importance of form in Church liturgy and religious practices receives emphasis in both novels. For example, it has been traditional to insist that the individual move his lips while praying, as though this made the prayer considerably more pleasing in the sight of God. Perhaps this originated in the thought that if one had to concentrate on moving his lips, he would also probably make the mental effort to meditate on what he was saying. This would explain why don Dionisio, as a last resort, tells Damián to move his lips should he decide to pray (272).

Similarly, there are several examples in both novels of emphasis on making the sign of the cross, and on the use of sacramentals such as holy water and medals. At times the emphasis is excessive. Those in Al filo del agua who wear seven medals around their neck instead of one (97) subscribe to the theory that the more sacramentals a person arms himself with, the better. These things are not all-powerful in themselves, but can aid the individual to bring God into his heart and soul. Excessive use is an abuse of their power.

Another example of the importance of form in Al filo del agua is the temperance oath, which all who participate in the spiritual exercises must take (45). This formal oath becomes a crutch to help the individual abstain from alcoholic beverages. Not only the parishioners, but also the priests take refuge in the outward manifestations of the liturgy, as with one priest who refuses to wrestle with the intellectual subtleties of Catholic dogma: "--Con lo cansado y enfermo que estoy, no me he puesto a pensar en esas

cosas, que no son ya de mi tiempo. Déjenme con mi misita y mi confesonario. Yo ya soy de la pelea pasada (155) . . ."

In Las tierras flacas, there is a heavy emphasis on studying the catechism. It is considered essential that everyone know the exact wording of this book as an end in itself. As an aid to leading a good life, memorization of the catechism is regarded as superior to merely knowing general concepts and basic ideas. Reading the Bible is generally frowned upon, partly because it is considered an activity of Protestants, but also because it is a big book considered impossible to memorize. Therefore it is not concise enough to give the people a concrete idea of what is expected of them as Catholics.

In both novels, the Devil appears in the traditional form of a snake, and souls are visualized as either white or black depending on whether or not they are in the state of grace. These are indications of the people's desire to think of religious elements in terms of something concrete. Another example of this touches on a more complicated consideration: the view of women in the two novels. Temptation is one of the least understood concepts in the works. In Al filo del agua, when the villagers think of temptation, they think of the sixth commandment; when they think of the sixth commandment, they think of women, not men. Thus the concept of woman becomes synonymous with the concept of temptation: "Pero, ¿por qué pueblo de mujeres enlutadas, de Hijas de María o de la Buena Muerte? En esta obra la mujer es víctima de una fuerte misogenia porque se la considera (como se ve en el caso de Micaela,

Victoria y otras) impura, influencia maléfica, y porque es símbolo de tentación y concupiscencia."[44]

The reason for this has its roots in the general view of women held by the Church. Although she has not been described as inferior to man in so many words, the woman's role in the Church has traditionally been severely limited. This has been the result of strict, narrow interpretations of certain Biblical passages. The possibilities of women performing liturgical functions have been played down, which is why they have often been seen merely as another unavoidable obstacle in the path to salvation. Perhaps because this concept has its origins in the Bible and not in the catechism, women, relatively speaking, are not held in quite such low esteem in Las tierras flacas. The two most respected figures in the novel, Teófila and Matiana, are women. Nevertheless, both are substitutes for priests in the region, which is a masculine concept.

Finally, the desire to concretize religion is seen in the people's willingness to attribute natural phenomena to miracles. This occurs in both novels, but particularly in Las tierras flacas. The primary miracle worker is Teófila's machine, and according to Merced, "la destrucción de los Trujillos es el más grande Milagro hecho por la santa Reliquia de Teófila (339-40)." Rómulo actually comes to expect miracles of Teófila, and worries when they are not regularly forthcoming. An example is when water shoots out of the ground after Miguel Arcángel's men finish their digging; Rómulo fears that God has punished Teófila:

> . . . yo no sé si atribuir a Teófila, pues desde que se murió (cosa que se me había casi olvidado) le pedí que me hiciera el milagro de darme agua, principalmente por el deseo que yo tenía de saber con toda evidencia si la muchacha estaba gozando del cielo; y cuando ahora me pongo a pensar si tanto retardo significa que todo este tiempo lo pasó en el purgatorio, me mortifico mucho y le doy vueltas escarbando qué motivos habría, pues era muchacha modelo, y no hallo ninguna causa de que pasara por las llamas del purgatorio (254) . . .

The tendency to place oneself totally in the hands of God has influenced the thought process of many Catholics at one time or another. One hears this piece of advice particularly when an individual is under pressure or has serious problems, and is uncertain of his future. It takes the place of worrying, and is a valid concept as long as it is accompanied by honest effort on the part of the individual. The work ethic also has an important place in Catholic tradition, and laziness is considered a major vice. Unfortunately, in Al filo del agua and Las tierras flacas the suggestion that one should ask God to help him gives way to total resignation. An example of this determinism in Al filo del agua is the reaction of one villager to the rumor that government troops are coming to the village to prohibit a procession: "Ahora, no hay más que ponernos en Sus Manos y resignarnos con Su Santísima Voluntad . . . Envainen sus espadas y no expongan al pueblo (106) . . ." This might be considered admirable resignation in the face of superior odds, but it stems from the contention that this resignation is admirable in itself, regardless of circumstances. In Las tierras flacas, it is perpetuated by Matiana and opposed by

Epifanio. This is ironic in that the so-called heretic of the region is the only one to speak out against this somewhat Calvinistic outlook on life, whereas the substitute priest falls into the same pitfall as the others.

Perhaps the tendency to leave everything to God is an indirect result of the all-embracing importance of the next world for the average Catholic. This is where the main emphasis should be, but although Christ said that His kingdom was not of this world,[45] He did not wish to imply that this world should be totally forsaken. As is so often the case in these two works, reasonable balance gives way to extremism and exaggeration. The idea that social reform is useless and should give way to cultivation of man's spiritual existence has been expressed in other works of fiction as well, such as when Don Manuel addresses the question in San Manuel Bueno, mártir: "¿Cuestión social? Deja eso, eso no nos concierne. Que traen una nueva sociedad, en que no haya ya ricos ni pobres, en que esté justamente repartida la riqueza, en que todo sea de todos, ¿y qué? ¿Y no crees que del bienestar general surgirá más fuerte el tedio a la vida?"[46] In Al filo del agua this attitude results in the extinguishing of Christian charity toward one's fellow man. The priests of the village fail to stress that the exercise of charity, the greatest of the theological virtues, on earth is one of the steppingstones to heaven. Yáñez considers this an important point, and does not wish the reader to miss it. Using Damián Limón and others who have returned to the village from the north as spokesmen, the author speaks out in opposition to the

way of life in the village. This is rare, because usually he lets the actions and the situations speak for themselves; but in this instance he chooses to drive home the point directly, in the second section of the chapter entitled "Los norteños." Here one of the northerners sums up his resistence to the teaching of the priests: "¿Qué plan peleamos? ¿La otra vida? Está bien; pero yo creo que también ésta podíamos pasarla mejor, siquiera como gentes (153)."

In Las tierras flacas the lack of emphasis on this world is noted in the people's opposition to progress, something which would make their life on earth more bearable. The people feel in their hearts that this is a matter of religious conviction; but more basically, it is a question of superstition and a blind adherence to tradition. These are the most essential problems that the author's spokesman, here Miguel Arcángel, has to overcome.

Speaking about Agustín Yáñez and Al filo del agua, Julieta Campos states the following: "Nos encontramos frente a uno de esos novelistas que encarnan en sus personajes eso que podría llamarse 'el universo católico del mal.' En la atmósfera ambigua de los Ejercicios Espirituales, el pueblo se libera como en una catarsis de un sustrato de erotismo y violencia."[47] Many factors combine to produce this Catholic universe of evil; the last factor, and one of the most important, to be discussed here is the matter of misconceptions and distortions of Catholic dogma. The general result of these distortions is discussed by Antonio Castro Leal:

> Habría que ver, por ejemplo, cómo la religión en los pequeños poblados ha ido deformando aun las formas más nobles y justificadas de la vida, de manera que los goces sacramentados del matrimonio cohiben y avergüenzan a los que contemplan una feliz pareja de recién casados, y cómo hasta la propia religión católica tiene, a los ojos severos de ciertos sacerdotes provincianos, un aire de exceso pagano que se creen obligados a apagar con torturas y frialdades que rayan en una interpretación calvinista y personal que no justifican los dogmas.[48]

In Al filo del agua, both priests and people misconstrue Catholic dogma in order to conform to the excessively rigid interpretation of religion practiced in the village. In addition to the examples already shown, such as Father Islas' deliberately confusing the doctrines of the Immaculate Conception with the Virgin Birth, are the following:

Page 16: Timoteo Limón regards the barking of the dogs as a bad omen, and fears that the face of a dead man he had killed years before will come back to haunt him. Superstition, as if creating a new, strange God, is classified as a sin against the first commandment. Timoteo Limón is a tortured figure who constantly tries to remove self-guilt for his sins through rationalization. Here, although he admits that ecclesiastical doctors have warned him against superstition, he cannot shake it from his person, perhaps because keep down he doesn't want to. He attempts to combat it with a barrage of prayers and devotions, rationalizing that it really isn't a grievous sin as long as he manages to convince himself that the death of the man was not his fault. Timoteo is not the only one guilty of superstition in the novel. A widespread

belief in the village is that the series of calamities leading up to the final invasion of the troops are due to Halley's comet (334).

Page 18: Timoteo attributes the loss of his crops, the death of Rosalía, the paralysis of his wife and the absence of Damián to punishment from God for his sins. The Bible speaks of everlasting punishment for the guilty in hell, but not necessarily on earth. The misconception that God will surely castigate the individual on earth for his sins, as if only the guilty experienced misfortunes, is one of the most prevalent in the work. Luis Gonzaga Perez' mother and Lucas Macías are others who share this belief. At one point Yáñez introduces the concept into his narration, mirroring the thoughts of the people. Referring to Damián and Micaela, he says: "¿Por qué un rayo, en esos momentos, no abatió a cualquiera de los dos desgraciados? ¿Por qué a esa hora no se abrió la tierra y se tragó a Damián (201)?" Most tragic of all, don Dionisio realizes at the end of the novel that he too had stressed this idea: "Mas él mismo ¿no ha predicado que las calamidades deben aceptarse como azotes de la divina justicia (386)?" With this in mind, he looks for a reason behind the invasion of the troops and cannot find one, which serves only to increase his final torment. This concept has its origins in the Old Testament, and never found its way into Church dogma.

Page 21: Timoteo Limón considers impure thoughts to be "el más feo de los pecados." Although sins against the sixth commandment are generally mortal sins, they should not be regarded as more horrid than, say, murder (which cries to heaven for vengeance) or hatred.

The sixth commandment is the chief concern not only of Father Islas, but of all the priests of the village, with the possible exception of Father Reyes. The concept of hell goes together with this commandment, as is seen in the meditations of the spiritual exercises: "Coincidieron la plática y el examen sobre materias del sexto mandamiento, con la meditación del Infierno (65)." The individual eventually comes to think that the sixth commandment is the only real threat to his eternal salvation. Timoteo, for example, finds much less difficulty in dismissing a scruple regarding his decision to foreclose on a farmer's mortgage (18-19) than he does in dismissing impure thoughts.

Page 27: Merceditas Toledo considers herself to be "encima de las tentaciones." As was the case with Luis Gonzaga Pérez, Merceditas confuses mere temptations with actual sins. No one is above temptations, and in fact God permits them as a test to the individual. On the following pages, Yáñez creates an imaginary dialogue between Merceditas and the Devil, in which this fact is brought out. Merceditas finishes by jumping out of bed and rushing into her mother's bedroom, screaming for a priest in order to go to confession. She believes she needs this because of the temptations she has undergone. Actually, she has succumbed to temptation only by rereading Julián's letter, the original source of the temptations, fooling herself into thinking she did it only as an exercise in will power. Ironically, she is more concerned about the temptations themselves than about having yielded to them.

Page 66: When one of the priests learns in the confessional of the existence of profane periodicals and novels of love in the village, he tells don Dionisio about it. Strictly speaking, it is forbidden for a priest to reveal to anyone what he has heard in the confessional. In this case, the necessity felt to completely control and dominate the lives of the parishioners takes unjustifiable precedence over this principle.

Page 67: In this same section, it is revealed in the confessional that one person had taken part in a strike in the north. Yáñez reveals this fact with mock alarm, as if strikes were anathema regardless of circumstances. In fact, the Church permits strikes "if the demands are just and reasonable, peaceful arbitration has failed, all violence is avoided, and there is reasonable hope for the success of the strike."[49] Although these stipulations are quite demanding, in this passage no possible mitigating circumstances are even hinted at.

Page 218: Yáñez states that the miracles attributed to Father Islas are regarded as articles of faith by the Daughters of Mary. This is a distortion and an unwarranted extension of the term "article of faith." The stories of "curaciones," of "multiplicación de alimentos," etc., give the reader an idea of the extensive imagination of the villagers. In any case, stories of miracles can under no circumstances become articles of faith, particularly those not found in the Bible. Catholics are under no obligation, for example, to believe that the Blessed Virgin appeared at Guadalupe, Fátima or Lourdes.

In most cases, misconceptions and distortions of Catholic dogma in Las tierras flacas are the result of ignorance, and very often can be traced in one way or another to the author's desire to create an Old Testament atmosphere. It has already been noted that the people mistakenly regard Teófila's sewing machine as a relic. Even this reminds one of some false god of the Old Testament, such as the golden calf the Israelites constructed after Moses went up to Mount Sinai to receive the commandments of God.[50] Epifanio Trujillo's denial of certain elements of the Catholic faith relate to his image as an Old Testament patriarch. He insists that his fostering of many illegitimate children by several women is not sinful, but beautiful. His disdain for the functions of the priest is consistent with his desire to be the sole influence in the region: ". . . de los padrecitos y el sol . . . oírles su misa cuando se pueda, y dejarlos (314). . ." Even his condemnation of superstition, one of his few positive religious traits, is not inconsistent with the goal of the Old Testament prophets, that of acquainting the people with the one true God, because superstitions, in effect, create several small gods which supposedly have supernatural power. In this area, Epifanio's opponent is Matiana, whose image, that of a priest, is a New Testament concept.

Examples of superstition in Las tierras flacas abound, and except for Epifanio and his legitimate children, the only individual who gives some evidence of overcoming his superstitious tendencies is Rómulo. Rómulo seriously questions the effectiveness of Palemón's divining rod, correctly suspecting that it has no scientific merit.

Unfortunately, he is motivated as much by a desire to avoid possible progress as by a desire to conform to the teachings of the Church.

In the people's attempt to justify resistance to change on religious grounds, they formulate an erroneous idea of the word "heretic." They do not want the name Damasco changed back to El Cabezón, and when Epifanio calls this region El Cabezón they suspect him of being a heretic (76). Merced brands Melesio a heretic when he dares to suggest that an airplane, not the Devil, flew overhead (94). Because he presumed to forecast the weather, thereby attempting to challenge the plan of God, Miguel Arcángel is considered a heretic (271). Heresy, therefore, is reduced to being simply resistance to the status quo. Opposed to this definition of heresy is an erroneous understanding of the term "article of faith," which appears twice in the novel, identified with resistance to change. Matiana symbolizes this resistance, and according to the people, "la protección del Ojo de la Providencia sobre Matiana y cuanto la rodea se hizo artículo de fe (149). . ." Again with reference to the airplane being the Devil, the author speaks of "francos disidentes e incrédulos frente a lo que días antes pasaba por artículo de fe (163)." As in Al filo del agua, the usage of the term is extended well beyond mere reference to the beliefs contained in the Apostles' Creed.

The equation of personal misfortune with punishment from God also appears in Las tierras flacas, though not as extensively. Finally, the exaggerated prudery of Plácida reminds the reader of the great emphasis put on the sixth commandment in Al filo del agua.

However, Plácida is even more extreme, and her mania for chastity is part of her nature and has nothing to do with religious scruples.

In summary, Yáñez does not present a true picture of Catholicism in either Al filo del agua or Las tierras flacas. His manipulation of its various elements achieves a number of different effects, including social criticism. This criticism is not vicious, but is definitely in evidence. Joseph Sommers feels that much of the criticism contained in Al filo del agua is absorbed by the priests of the village:

> The Edge of the Storm is anticlerical in tone, but not antireligious, again indicating a greater complexity of world view. The anticlericalism lies in a sense of the utter inadequacy of blind, fanatical dogmatism which affirms the hegemony of death and guilt over life and love. It is devastating in its evaluation of anachronistic practices which repress the individual and impose fear rather than faith, in effect generating anguish. But at the same time, its dualistic approach makes possible a sensitive view of authentic religiosity beneath the overlay of extremism, and an appreciation of the undeniable weight of traditions inherited over centuries.[51]

Religious fanaticism lies at one extreme of the Jaliscan personality, and Yáñez wishes to say that when it becomes repressive, the effect is highly negative. On the other hand, in Las tierras flacas it appears that if he wishes to criticize anyone, it is those who have no religious feelings: Epifanio, and to an even greater extent, Felipe, Jesusito and Plácida. These characters exhibit selfishness and cruelty, and relentlessly struggle for power in the Tierra Santa. They represent the other extreme in

the Jaliscan personality, that is, the pistol waving, violent aspect. The religious atmosphere of the novel affords a sharp contrast, and makes the ruthlessness of a few stand out more unfavorably.

Finally, from a religious point of view, not many characters in the two works emerge in an admirable light, but two that do are don Dionisio and Teófila. The latter is not presented as a flesh-and-blood character, but rather as a legend; thus she becomes a symbol of perfection in the reader's mind. Don Dionisio's shortcomings become glaringly evident; but because of his overwhelming sincerity he becomes a hero that the reader can more readily identify with, a hero in a novel where the other men of the cloth are presented in a bad light.

These are some of the important concepts related to Catholicism in Al filo del agua and Las tierras flacas. The following chapter will deal with elements of the Bible in the two works.

NOTES

[1]Carballo, Diecinueve protagonistas de la literatura mexicana del siglo XX, pp. 291-2.

[2]Luke 10: 30-37.

[3]Ps. 129: 1-2.

[4]Díaz de León, p. 457.

[5]Lagos, p. 107.

[6]Díaz de León, p. 471.

[7]Agustín Yáñez, Las tierras flacas (Mexico: Editorial Joaquín Mortiz, 1962), p. 9. Subsequent quotes hereafter will be from this same edition, with page numbers given in parentheses. Italicized passages will be underlined.

[8]Brushwood, p. 48.

[9]José Martínez Ruiz ("Azorín"), "Vida de un labrantín," from España, 3rd ed. (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1967), p. 101.

[10]Azorín, p. 102.

[11]Azorín, p. 102.

[12]Octaviano Valdés, "Las tierras flacas," Nivel, No. 3 (March 25, 1963), pp. 5, 10.

[13]Manuel Pedro González, "Agustín Yáñez y su última novela," Casa de las Américas, 2, Nos. 11-12 (March-June, 1962), 43-46.

[14]Agustín Yáñez, La creación, 2nd ed. (Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1959), pp. 115-116.

[15]Agustín Yáñez, La tierra pródiga, 3rd ed. (Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1966), p. 105.

[16]Yáñez, La tierra pródiga, pp. 155-6.

[17]Yáñez, La tierra pródiga, p. 35.

[18]González, p. 45.

[19]Raúl Chávarri, "Nuevo combate del hombre por la tierra," review of La tierra pródiga, Cuadernos Hispanoamericanos, 64, No. 190 (October, 1965), 200.

[20]Yáñez, La tierra pródiga, p. 38.

[21]Yáñez, La tierra pródiga, p. 273. The italics are from the book.

[22]John 11: 1-45.

[23]Acts 1: 9-11.

[24]Sylvester, p. 4.

[25]Eileen M. Connelly, "La Centralidad del Protagonista en Al filo del agua," Revista Iberoamericana, 32, No. 62 (July-December, 1966), 279.

[26]Yáñez, La tierra pródiga, p. 313. The italics are from the book.

[27]The Catholic Dictionary, The Holy Bible, Holy Trinity Edition (Chicago: The Catholic Press, 1951), p. 124.

[28]Porfirio Sánchez, "Eros y Thanatos en Al filo del agua," Cuadernos Americanos, 163, No. 2 (March-April, 1969), 258.

[29]Sánchez, p. 258.

[30]Matt. 17: 1-9; Mark 9: 1-9; Luke 9: 28-36.

[31]John 13: 1.

[32]Matt. 21: 12-13; Mark 11: 15-17; Luke 19: 45-46; John 2: 13-17.

[33]Miguel de Unamuno, San Manuel Bueno, mártir from Dos novelas cortas (Waltham: Blaisdell Publishing Company, 1961), p. 8.

[34]Unamuno, p. 21.

[35]Sommers, p. 53.

[36]Unamuno, pp. 15-16.

[37]Sánchez, pp. 260-61.

[38]Luke 1: 11, 19, 26 ff.

[39]Daniel 12: 1.

[40]Manuel Altolaguirre, "Sobre Al filo del agua," Nivel, 13 (January 25, 1964), p. 4.

[41]John 1: 47.

[42]Matt. 5: 29.

[43]Gal. 4: 15.

[44]Sánchez, p. 254.

[45]John 18: 36.

[46]Unamuno, p. 30.

[47]Julieta Campos, "El barroquismo interior de Yáñez," in La Imagen en el Espejo (Mexico: Universidad Nacional Autónoma, 1965), p. 161.

[48]Antonio Castro Leal, "Prólogo," Al filo del agua, 9th ed. (Mexico: Editorial Porrúa, 1961), p. x.

[49]The Catholic Dictionary, p. 224.

[50]Ex. 32.

[51]Sommers, p. 62.

CHAPTER IV

THE BIBLE IN AL FILO DEL AGUA AND LAS TIERRAS FLACAS

This chapter will deal with the following matters: 1(the Biblical atmosphere of Las tierras flacas; 2) Biblical name symbolism in the novels; 3) Biblical themes in the novels; 4) explicit Biblical references and 5) implicit Biblical references in the novels.

In Al filo del agua and Las tierras flacas, Agustín Yáñez makes considerable use of the Bible as an aid to characterization, development of plot, and statements of personal opinion. Generally speaking, in Al filo del agua, Biblical references are less fundamental to the effectiveness of the novel than in Las tierras flacas. The priests of Al filo del agua, as well as several other characters, are quite familiar with the Bible, and allude to it often. But this manifests itself as merely an extension of the essentially liturgical, rather than Biblical, atmosphere of the work. On the other hand, in Las tierras flacas the atmosphere is primarily Biblical; in relative importance, the novel's liturgical elements are relegated to a secondary role. The author does not rely heavily on the characters to present aspects of the Bible. The characters' direct Biblical knowledge is not extensive, nor does it have to be. Far more in Las tierras flacas than in Al filo del agua, the author himself accepts direct responsibility for introducing Biblical

elements into the narration. The establishment of a Biblical atmosphere is vital to the work, and is extremely elaborate: "La novela está compuesta sobre un trasfondo bíblico que aparece en los nombres de los poblados, en los de algunos de los personajes y más aún en sus creencias austeras y primitivas."[1]

Al filo del agua, in a sense, is the story of a village that constantly strives to preserve the status quo. Neither the priests nor the people consider the village to be in a state of evolution. Any sort of change in its daily life would be regarded as a step backwards. This is unlike the spirit of the Old Testament, in which the people looked forward to the coming of a Savior, and thus to a better future life on earth. Even in the New Testament, Christ and the Apostles envisioned a day yet to come in which all people, having heard the gospel of Christ, would dedicate their lives completely to God. These villagers feel that they have arrived at that ideal way of life in the sight of God, and that they must do nothing to change it. They consider it to be a culmination of the work of Christ and His Apostles, and the patriarchs and prophets before them. The only goal the people have is to attain life everlasting in the next world. Since they do not aspire to a better life on earth, it would be inappropriate for the author to construct a Biblical atmosphere in Al filo del agua. Although the novel contains many Biblical references and Biblical themes, the people's attitudes are often contrary to prevalent attitudes in the Bible. One example of this has already been shown. The villagers regard marriage as a distasteful necessity, whereas in the Bible

it is a cause for celebration and joy. Several passages illustrate this, among them Esth. 2: 18: "And he commanded a magnificent feast to be prepared for all the princes, and for his servants, for the marriage and wedding of Esther."[2] Even St. Paul, who clearly expresses preference for virginity over the married state in 1 Cor. 7, does not view marriage with the same degree of hostility as these people. In summary, the Biblical references in Al filo del agua do not serve to create an essentially Biblical atmosphere, and are helpful but not indispensable additions to the text of the novel.

In Las tierras flacas Yáñez creates an Old Testament atmosphere as the novel's foundation. There are two reasons why this is appropriate and effective. The first one has to do with the remarkable resemblance between the Old Testament Jews and the people that Yáñez wishes to bring to life. Although the people of the Tierra Santa choose to resist material progress, at the same time they desire another kind of change. They are hoping for someone to come to the region and overthrow Epifanio Trujillo, thereby avenging the injustices they have suffered for so many years. This person turns out to be Miguel Arcángel, but he is not the type of "Savior" the people have envisioned. He does not show himself to be a vengeful person, and the people resent the type of change that he brings them: material progress in the form of electricity, weather vanes, irrigation canals, etc. This is the culmination of the potential state of evolution which the reader senses in the Tierra Santa from the outset of the novel. The Old Testament Jews also were awaiting a Savior who would come to right the injustices they

had suffered. And Jesus Christ, like Miguel Arcángel (Jacob Gallo), brought His people a type of change they had not anticipated nor desired, and against which they initially rebelled.

Las tierras flacas is divided into five sections; the fifth section is entitled: "Damasco y Galilea: La Entrada de la Electricidad." In this section the old ways of the region are replaced with the new ways of progress, and the Old Testament atmosphere declines rapidly. Thus, approximately four-fifths of the novel depicts the region's old way of life, and the final one-fifth traces the beginning of a new way of life. This parallels the Bible, in that the Old Testament comprises roughly four-fifths of its text, the New Testament one-fifth. In this limited sense, the novel is a miniature history of the Tierra Santa region patterned after the Bible.

Second, in order to make Jacob Gallo's triumph all the more impressive, Yáñez recognizes the necessity of immersing the reader into a primitive atmosphere where there are virtually no signs of material progress. Since the action takes place in Jalisco, the atmosphere must also be conducive to bringing out the religious aspects of the Jaliscan character. The Old Testament atmosphere the author establishes is an ideal vehicle through which he emphasizes both concepts.

Yáñez creates this Old Testament atmosphere with great care and in great detail, and some of his techniques are more evident than others. One obvious technique is the use of Biblical place names and names of Biblical characters. In addition to contributing to the Biblical atmosphere by their very nature, some of them are

symbolic. Also evident are many general Biblical themes, some of which are treated extensively, while others are mentioned only in passing. Name symbolism, extensively treated Biblical themes, and other Biblical references, all part of the general Biblical atmosphere, will be discussed later in detail. This section will deal only with: 1) those references which are not part of an extensively depicted Biblical theme and which cannot be compared with any specific Biblical passage; and 2) the author's use of proverbs.

It has been stated that the people of the Tierra Santa are not knowledgeable with regard to the Bible; naturally, it would be unrealistic to present them as educated. Thus, they are not consciously aware that in many instances their words and actions have Biblical parallels. It is the narrator who assumes the burden of creating an Old Testament atmosphere in Las tierras flacas. He achieves it without being heavyhanded and without the characters' losing their basic simplicity; as a result, the novel's basic realism is not distorted. The following are examples of brief, subtle allusions which plunge the reader into a Biblical frame of mind without drawing his attention away from the novel.

On page 42 there are two excessively long lists of animals. Their purpose is to emphasize the fact that Epifanio Trujillo has an outstanding memory. This could have been done, however, without mentioning fifty-four different animals, thereby making the passage read like a grocery list. But the effect is that the reader is subconsciously reminded of the story of Noe and the ark (Gen. 6-10), since it is one of the few stories anywhere in which many different kinds of animals are united in one place.

Curses, in the sense of condemnations, quite common in the Old Testament, are not often heard in modern times. Yet curses are heard on the plains of the Tierra Santa:

> Este año sólo se oían abominaciones.
> --Abominación de la Casa Grande. (Qué infamia)
> --Abominación de los Trujillos. (Tan infames el pinto como el amarillo)
> --Abominación de Belén. (Cueva de mecos desmadrados)
> --Abominación de la Tierra Santa. (Ni a quién voltear)
> Abominación sobre abominación. (175)

These curses, at the very least, are an anachronism, and are included to reflect the harsh Old Testament concept that any wrongdoing is to be officially and severely condemned. The reader is likely to react unfavorably to these condemnations, and hope more fervently for change.

When Matiana recalls her girlhood in an interior monologue (180-85), there is an extreme remoteness to the narration. She recalls being married off by her parents to a man she had never seen before the day of the marriage, during a time when it was said that the French carried off girls in their rampage through the country (immediately preceding the reign of Maximilian, 1864-67). It was also the custom in the Old Testament to arrange marriages through the parents. This in itself would not be sufficient to link Matiana's experience to the Bible; but the reason for the hastily arranged marriage, the danger posed by the French, is reminiscent of the Old Testament fear of foreign powers invading a powerless town and carrying off girls. One example of this among

several is the invasion of Silo by the Benjamites for the purpose of obtaining wives (Judg. 21: 21-24). Like the curses, this is a negative aspect of the Bible. Inclusion of such aspects are necessary so as not to make the Biblical atmosphere of Las tierras flacas too spiritually attractive.

In the novel there is a preoccupation with the availability of water, as evidenced by the recurring episode of Palemón, Rómulo and the divining rod. The absolute necessity of rain for the livelihood of the people is emphasized in the section which describes their fervent prayers for rain and the supposed conflict between these prayers and Miguel Arcángel's modern methods of weather forecasting (269-71). This same preoccupation is in evidence in the Old Testament, with the result that water is symbolic. According to John L. McKenzie, S.J., "In biblical imagery water is life and salvation. The saving acts of Yahweh for Israel are compared to the production of water, especially to the production of water in the desert."[3] Similarly, the coming of rain in the novel provides the people with a religious experience; as already noted, they attribute the rain directly to a saving act of God. The Old Testament Jews were highly dependent upon God, and here the author suggests that the same is true of the Tierra Santa inhabitants. Also previously noted is Epifanio's contention that one does not need a chapel in order to pray, but that it can be done anywhere at any time. This too is consistent with the more direct link in the Old Testament between man and God, and with the feeling that God and man are working together very closely.

The final aspect to be considered in this section are the numerous proverbs contained in Las tierras flacas. With regard to their content, these proverbs are not comparable in general to those found in the Bible, chiefly in the books of Proverbs and Ecclesiasticus. Rather, they are the proverbs of the Jaliscan peasant, little truisms of life, witty pieces of advice designed to help the common man make it through his daily existence. Despite the fact that they are almost totally devoid of religious considerations, they contribute to the novel's Biblical atmosphere in a number of ways.

The purpose of the proverbs in Las tierras flacas, and of proverbs in general, is to present a cross sampling of life's complexities in the simplest possible way. The people who use them, that is, the peasants, have not had an opportunity to become educated. Their only hope in coping with life is to abide by simple, concrete expressions of what other people have told them to be the truth. The proverbs in the Old Testament have precisely the same purpose. The Bible is an excellent example of a book designed to present intellectual concepts in an uncomplicated way to a large, uneducated audience. This is evident not only in the books containing proverbs, but in all of the Old Testament books. One should not be expected to believe the story of Judith, or that Moses divided the Red Sea, or that Jonas was swallowed by a great fish and vomited onto the shore. The authors of the Old Testament wish merely to present truths through entertaining stories, and Christ continued this tradition in the New Testament with His parables. The proverbs are the shortest, simplest individual passages in the Old Testament,

which in its entirety was intended to be simple. In addition to their function of simplification, they console the uneducated listener by removing some of his anxieties. Especially since Yáñez uses so very many proverbs in Las tierras flacas, the reader, inevitably reminded of the Bible, applies the situation of the Old Testament Jews to the Tierra Santa inhabitants.

Proverbs are found in the mouths of many of the novel's characters, but no one utters more of them than Epifanio Trujillo. Since he is a powerful man, his sayings are given more credence by the listener than they would if uttered by a poor man. This situation also has its parallel in the Bible, because the supposed authors of Proverbs and Ecclesiasticus were also influential men: King Solomon and Jesus, son of Sirach, respectively. Although content-wise many of Epifanio's proverbs are in antithesis to those found in the Bible, they are remarkably similar in one area: the proverbs that deal with women.

In the previous chapter it was stated that women are not held in such low esteem in Las tierras flacas as in Al filo del agua. Relatively speaking, this is true. Teófila and Matiana are perhaps the two characters that the people of the region most admire. Yet one of the most outstanding features of the proverbs in the novel are the many that are blatantly misogynic. In theory women are considered, as in Al filo del agua, basically evil. Among the proverbs against women are found the following: "entre la mujer y el gato ni a cuál ir de más ingrato (51)"; "ni grullo ni grulla, ni mujer que arguya (76)"; "la que al toser te entienda, tiene

buena rienda (76)"; "naipe, tabaco, vino y mujer echan al hombre a perder (229)"; "la mujer y la guitarra son del que las toca (224)"; "de puerta abierta, perro guzgo y mujer deshonesta (274)"; "más vale querer a un perro que no a una ingrata mujer--Carta que se niega y mujer que se va no hay que buscarlas (312)"; "compadre que a la comadre no le anda por las caderas, no es compadre de deveras--mujer a quien le das lo que te pide . . .--de la gallina más vieja resulta el caldo mejor (315)"; "la yegua debe tener barriga de doncella, pechos de casada y ancas de viuda (326)."

The tone of the Jaliscan proverbs dealing with women directly parallels that of Proverbs and Ecclesiasticus. Misogynistic proverbs in these books are too numerous to list, but the following are typical: "A golden ring in a swine's snout, a woman fair and foolish (Prov. 11: 22)"; "the mouth of a strange woman is a deep pit: he whom the Lord is angry with shall fall into it (Prov. 22: 14)"; "wine and women make wise men fall off, and shall rebuke the prudent (Ecclus. 19: 2)"; "all malice is short to the malice of a woman, let the lot of sinners fall upon her (Ecclus. 25: 26)." The only explanation for the inclusion of proverbs of this type is that the authors of these two books misinterpreted Moses' original statement describing women: "And the Lord God built the rib which he took from Adam into a woman: and brought her to Adam. And Adam said: This now is bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man (Gen. 2: 22-23)." It is not at all certain that this passage was meant to imply that woman is inferior to man; rather, it is most likely a

statement of equality. As a result, the misogynistic passages in Proverbs and Ecclesiasticus stand out among the most dated, unfair and incorrect in the Old Testament. Although Christ never repudiated them directly, McKenzie states that His dealings with women "reveal in Jesus a total absence of the misogyny and the assumption of the inferiority of woman which prevailed in the Jewish world of His time. His teaching in this respect is not revolutionary, but His conduct is."[4]

The anti-feminine proverbs in Las tierras flacas invite a comparison with the Bible. When the reader considers that the authors of Proverbs and Ecclesiasticus were wrong about the nature of woman, and that Christ, by His actions, amended this view; and once the reader applies this to the situation in the novel, his attention is drawn to the fact that the representation of women in the proverbs is not consistent with the author's treatment of them in the novel. Yáñez, then, through his characters, attributes a certain dignity to woman, as Christ did during His life. This helps lead one to suspect that change in the Tierra Santa is soon to be realized, just as the New Testament amended the old law. This is an essential part of the Old Testament atmosphere that Yáñez succeeds in creating; some of its other components are analyzed in the following sections.

Biblical name symbolism plays a minor role in Al filo del agua and a major role in Las tierras flacas. In Al filo del agua, this symbolism centers chiefly around the names of the nieces of the parish priest, Marta and María. The Biblical significance of

Gabriel's name has already been discussed in the previous chapter; the comments to be made in this chapter concern his relationship to María.

Aside from these names, the only other name symbolism found in the novel relates to Orión, Timoteo Limón's dog. The constellation Orion is mentioned twice in the Bible, each time as an example of the great power of Almighty God: "He maketh Arcturus, and Orion, and Hyades, and the inner parts of the south (Job 9: 9)";"seek him that maketh Arcturus and Orion, and that turneth darkness into morning, and that changeth day into night: that calleth the waters of the sea, and poureth them out upon the face of the earth: the Lord is his name (Amos 5: 8)." Near the beginning of the novel Timoteo Limón hears the barking and howling of Orión (15), and in a rush his scruples come back to torture him. He fears that God will use His power to damn him to hell; thus, in this context too, Orión becomes a symbol of the power of God. Several pages later Damián kills Orión: "Los aullidos de Orión toda la noche y la madrugada del día siete se hicieron tan insoportables, que Damián se levantó y mató al perro con certero balazo (260)." This is consistent with the image that the villagers have of Damián; they consider him to be the archenemy of God and religion. Assuming that Orión symbolizes the power of God, his death at the hands of Damián symbolizes the latter's "war on religion," as seen from the villagers' point of view. This symbolism, however, is solely for the benefit of the reader, and is an ironic rather than a solemnly meaningful element. No implication is intended that the villagers considered Orión's death as an attack by Damián on religion.

Only one person named Martha appears in the Bible, whereas there are several Marys. A comparison was presented in the previous chapter between don Dionisio and Christ. The fact that the priest's nieces are named Marta and María strongly suggests a comparison with Martha and Mary, sisters of Lazarus. María's personality resembles not only that of Mary of Bethany, but also Mary Magdalene. Martha Díaz de León, among others, points this out, first comparing María with Mary Magdalene: "Además de Mercedes y Micaela y todas las que forman parte de ese conjunto sombrío de mujeres enlutadas, sobresalen Marta y María; la piadosa y la pecadora, sobrinas del cura don Dionisio."[5] Later on she draws the comparison with Mary of Bethany, while continuing to maintain the affinity with Mary Magdalene:[6] "Marta y María son aquí las mismas hermanas que estuvieron cerca de Jesús . . . la primera la santa, la segunda la pecadora, que se arrepiente solamente en la pesadilla de don Dionisio."[7]

Furthermore, Yáñez creates an affinity between María and Gabriel, which suggests a possible connection between María and the Blessed Virgin. And as will be shown later, at one point in the novel María even reminds the reader of Mary, sister of Moses and Aaron.

The author takes pains to associate Marta and María with the sisters of Lazarus. First, he states: "Marta y María son, en efecto, las cuerdas sensibles del viejo cura (73)." John 11:5 implies that Martha and Mary were "cuerdas sensibles" of Christ as well; also, when Christ saw Mary weeping, "he groaned in spirit and was troubled (John 11: 33)." A few pages later, Yáñez mentions

the gospel of Monday in Holy Week (92-93), which happens to be about Jesus in Bethany at Lazarus' house, after which the author once again begins to talk about Marta. Also, perhaps Marta's use of the word "lazarinas (79)" in reference to unwed mothers is significant.

Yáñez mentions that Marta is twenty-seven years old, María twenty-one (71). One gathers from reading the Bible that Martha was also the older of the two sisters. She is mentioned first (John 11: 5), and when Christ comes to resuscitate their dead brother Lazarus, Martha is the one who goes out to meet him (John 11: 20). Yáñez describes Marta as being a hard worker in the house; she is "el ama del hogar (73)" and "Marta de la mañana, madrugadora (93)." This coincides with the image of Martha in Luke 10: 38-42, where she does the serving in the house while Mary sits and listens to Christ, and in John 12: 2, where she serves supper to Christ and Lazarus.

Between the two sisters, the author states that for don Dionisio, "la predilecta es María (73)." Christ also appears to favor Mary over Martha: "But the Lord answered and said to her, 'Martha, Martha, thou art anxious and troubled about many things; and yet only one thing is needful. Mary has chosen the best part, and it will not be taken away from her (Luke 10: 41-42)." Since María does not appear to exhibit Mary of Bethany's personality traits, perhaps the affinity between the two women is basically from the point of view of the parish priest. This would have to be the case if Alberto Bonifaz Nuño is referring to Mary of Bethany when he says: "Intimamente, esta María es la misma que enjugó con sus

cabellos los pies del Salvador . . ."[8] In John 12: 3, Mary of Bethany wipes Jesus' feet with her hair. However, Mary Magdalene is generally regarded as the woman who wipes Jesus' feet with her hair in Luke 7: 38, and Bonifaz Nuño most likely is referring to her. In this case the María of La creación would correspond to the reformed Mary Magdalene of the Bible, whereas the María of Al filo del agua would correspond to the untamed Mary Magdalene, who had seven devils in her before Christ cast them out (Mark 16: 9; Luke 8: 2).

The fact that Yáñez has Mary Magdalene in mind when he refers to the "genio difícil (73)" of María is confirmed in don Dionisio's dream: "¿Ni siquiera porque soy tu sobrina? ¿No me conoces? Me llamo María Magdalena (212)." This affinity with Mary Magdalene is intended to stress María's restless nature, and does not imply her to be a sinner of the same magnitude as Mary Magdalene was before meeting Christ. In fact, the positive side of Mary Magdalene is also applied to María when the latter wipes the blood from the wounded Rito Becerra (361). Mary Magdalene administered to Jesus, and was present at His death (Matt. 27: 55-56; Mark 15: 40-41).

There is only a fleeting glimpse of similarity in temperament between María and the Blessed Virgin, as seen when María shows apparent interest in caring for Pedrito, just as Mary cared for Christ:

> Y cuando se abrigaban temores por la acrimonia de María, ésta sumó su gusto al de Marta, quiso juntar cuidados de niña que juega con un muñeco . . . tuvo decisión para proponer al señor cura que hubiera este

> año posadas, con el propósito de sacar al huérfano de pastor; fué ahora la de la iniciativa para componer el Nacimiento con una semana de anticipación (317) . . .

However, María quickly becomes bored with Pedrito. Thus, the only true affinity between her and the Blessed Virgin bears upon her relationship to Gabriel. There is a certain magical link between the two. Gabriel senses María's love for him when they exchange a brief glance after Victoria's departure from the village (241-42). After Gabriel's departure, María, for some inexplicable reason, cannot help but think about him (313-14). This nebulous unity between them is felt by everyone in the village: "El pueblo da como cosa hecha, que a nadie llama la atención, el matrimonio entre Gabriel y María. Ni siquiera se habla de esto. Negocio convenido, lógico (179)." The archangel Gabriel appears to Mary in Luke 1: 26-38, announcing that she will have a son. The villagers' thought process must surely be influenced by this when they assume that María and Gabriel will eventually marry. Ironically, however, María marries Jacobo Ibarra (this fact is revealed in La creación). Since, after all, there is so little similarity in character traits between María and the Virgin, it is appropriate that the people's expectations not be fulfilled. The Biblical text offers a possible insight as to María's ultimate fate: the archangel Gabriel tells the Blessed Virgin that her son "shall be king over the house of Jacob forever (Luke 1: 32)."

Finally, a comparison between María and Mary, sister of Moses and Aaron, comes to mind when the author reflects on María's loneliness toward the end of the novel: "¡Cuán sola, cuán desamparada

se sintió María (360)!" As the gap between María and the rest of the villagers widens, their rejection of her becomes more and more pronounced. Finally, she realizes that she is no longer of the village, and leaves. Similarly, Mary, after contracting leprosy, was separated from the rest of the camp (Num. 12: 14). Thus both women feel themselves to be outcasts.

In summary, Yáñez uses Biblical name symbolism in Al filo del agua primarily as a means of characterization. María's personality is far more complex than Marta's, and appropriately resembles the personality of several different Biblical figures.

In Las tierras flacas, name symbolism appears not only in the names of characters, but also in geographical place names. As Teódulo notes, the basic reason for naming the region Tierra Santa, and naming the various ranches after Biblical cities, is that since it is not possible for the inhabitants to practice Catholicism as they would if they lived in a city, the least they can do is show their religious sincerity by assigning holy names to the various places (39). Some of the names appear to have no ulterior significance: Betania, Betulia, Damasco, Galilea, Canán, Cafarnaum. Nevertheless, in their small way, they enhance the Biblical atmosphere of the novel. Jesús Arellano observes the following with regard to Biblical place names: "Este recurso, si no lee uno la obra parecerá extraño e injustificado, pero ya interiorizados nos convencemos de lo mucho que ayuda para crear el justo clima sicológico que los personajes necesitan para moverse y actuar con toda comodidad."[9]

Some of the place names do resemble their Biblical counterparts to a small degree. One of the springs of the region is named Jericó.

In the Bible, Jericho was the site of the famous spring whose waters were healed by Eliseus (4 Kings 2: 19-22). The novel mentions that Getsemaní is "el [rancho] más poblado de árboles (37)," and that it has "una Cruz enorme a la que llamaban de la Misión, pintada de verde (38)." Gethsemani was the scene of Christ's agony in the garden (Matt. 26: 36-39; Mark 14: 32-36; Luke 22: 39-43), which preceded His death on the cross. Both the cross and the trees at Getsemaní suggest this scene, because the Bible several times refers to Christ's cross as a tree: "The God of our fathers raised Jesus, whom you put to death, hanging him on a tree (Acts 5: 30)"; "and we are witnesses of all that he did in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem; and yet they killed him, hanging him on a tree (Acts 10: 39)"; "and when they had carried out all that had been written concerning him, they took him down from the tree and laid him in a tomb (Acts 13: 29)." Also, Luke's account of the agony has it taking place on the Mount of Olives. This suggests that the garden of Gethsemani must surely have had several olive trees. Finally, Joseph, father of Jesus, was a carpenter in Nazareth. In Las tierras flacas, when a carpenter is needed to make Epifanio's casket, he inevitably comes from Nazaret (306).

Bethlehem, in the Bible, was centrally located in the Holy Land, about a league and a half south of Jerusalem and about the same distance from Bethany. In the novel, Belén is a league away from Betania and about an hour away in time (36), roughly what it must have been in Biblical times. Belén is the center of the Tierra Santa in that it is the home of Epifanio Trujillo. According to the

Catholic Dictionary, Bethlehem means house of bread.[10] This is significant in Las tierras flacas because the richest man in the region lives at Belén, and because Epifanio, for all his shortcomings, never fails to give food to passers-by. At the same time the name has ironic overtones, since the events that occur at Belén are anything but tranquil and religious. Sara Gallo, mother of Miguel Arcángel, speaks of the "infierno de Belén (109)." Belén is also the scene of the yearly pastorals, and Yáñez begins the third section of the novel by alluding to Luke 2: 8: "En Belén los pastores y había luna (159)." Ironically, this atmosphere of serenity is soon broken by the scuffle arising from the dispute as to whether the vendors at the pastorals should have to pay a fee for the privilege of selling their wares at the Casa Grande.

The final consideration involving place names relates to the author's mention of six ranches that used to exist on the plain but have since disappeared (39). Four of the six mentioned: El Hebrón, Siloe, Ascalón, and Gasa correspond to places destroyed or captured at one time or another in the Old Testament. Josue's army captured Hebron shortly after slaying Horam, king of Gazer (Josue 10: 36-37). The Old Testament does not give a literal rendering of the destruction of Silo, but several passages hint that it was in fact destroyed: "And he forsook the tabernacle in Silo, the tent where he dwelt among men (Ps. 78: 60)"; "go ye to my place in Silo, where my name dwelt from the beginning: and see what I did to it for the wickedness of my people Israel (Jer. 7: 12)"; "why hath he prophesied in the name of the Lord, saying: This house shall be like Silo; and this

city shall be made desolate without an inhabitant (Jer. 26: 9)?" As a result Silo, like Sodom and Gomorrha, is associated with the wrath of God punishing the wicked for their sins, which is a theme running throughout Las tierras flacas. Judges 1: 18 recounts the capture of Ascalón and Gaza by Juda, and Gaza was also captured and burnt by Jonathan (1 Mach. 11: 61).

Another city often attacked or destroyed, Jerusalem, is the most significant place name in the novel. Jerusalem, like Rome, has managed to survive numerous attacks and two destructions during its history, only to rebuild again; consequently, Jerusalem has acquired an air of indestructability. The author describes the destruction of the Tierra Santa's Jerusalén on page 39: "hoy día sólo queda en pie una casa deshabitada: lo demás, montones de ruinas . . ." However, when Miguel Arcángel returns, he elects to set up his headquarters at what used to be Jerusalén. His talk about restoring Jerusalén to its former grandeur through reconstruction (138, 206) has numerous Biblical parallels, of which the following is an example: "And the children of strangers shall build up thy walls, and their kings shall minister to thee: for in my wrath I have struck thee, and in my reconciliation have I had mercy upon thee (Is. 60: 10)." At the same time Miguel's enemies speak about destroying Jerusalén once again: "echar sal sobre Jerusalén para que nadie, nunca intentara de nuevo reconstruirla (269)." However, the association of Miguel Arcángel with Jerusalén is prophetic, and the hopes of his enemies ring hollow. This is just one more device designed to make the reader realize that progress will inevitably triumph.

The most important name symbolism in Las tierras flacas deals with Miguel Arcángel, alias Jacob Gallo. But there are also several minor characters whose names are significant. At times the coincidence is so very evident that the reader is apt to feel that the author is toying with him.

The names of Rómulo's dogs: Nerón, Herodes, and Caifás, achieve an ironic effect, since the dogs are basically gentle, and are brutally killed by Jesusito's men. These are the names of three people who condemn others to death. Tradition has it that Nero put Sts. Peter and Paul to death. Herod the Great is mentioned in Matt. 2: 16-18 in connection with the Christ child and the slaughter of the Holy Innocents. Rómulo affirms that Herodes was "el más ladino, el que olía de muy lejos (246)." The Biblical Herod tried to trick the Magi into thinking that he wanted to worship the Christ child (Matt. 2: 8). And both Joseph and the Magi were warned about Herod in dreams, even though he was far away (Matt. 2: 12-13). Rómulo describes Caifás as "el más travieso y corredor, el más alborotador (246)." This too is consistent with the personality of the high priest Caiaphas. Even before handing over Christ to be crucified (Matt. 26: 66), Caiaphas was highly concerned about the danger that Jesus presented to the Jewish nation, and concluded that "it is expedient for us that one man die for the people, instead of the whole nation perishing (John 11: 50)." The origin of the proverb "la ley de Caifás: al fregado, fregarlo más (10)" undoubtedly stems from Matt. 26: 57-66, where Caiaphas merely went along with the people instead of defending Christ. Ironically, it is Caifás who dies in the novel, at the hands of Jesusito, another irony.

In one of Rómulo's first interior monologues, he describes the great difficulty Merced had in giving birth to Teófila. When all else failed, a certain "Simón el forzudo" was called upon to "help" with the delivery: "se la sentó en las piernas, por la espalda, y esto es abrazarla con todo el pote, que milagro fue no despanzurrarla en presencia de concurrentes y curiosos (26-27)." Although grotesque, this is reminiscent of Simon of Cyrene, who helped Jesus carry His cross (Matt. 27: 32; Mark 15: 21).

The names of Epifanio's various mistresses, in order, are Eva, Sara, Rebeca, Raquel, Abigail, Ana, and Amanda (58). The similarities between Epifanio and the Biblical patriarchs will be discussed in the next section. These similarities are complemented by the fact that with the exception of Amanda, the Biblical counterparts of all of his mistresses were wives of patriarchs; furthermore, their chronological order is the same as in the Bible, if one compares Ana to the wife of Tobias instead of the wife of Elcana. The second mistress, Sara, is the mother of Jacob Gallo in the novel; in the Bible, however, she is Jacob's grandmother.

Three of the four women who attend to Epifanio after his death are Salomé, Verónica and Cleofas (273). All three of these are also women who ministered to Christ. Salome, who was present when Christ died, "used to accompany him and minister to him when he was in Galilee (Mark 15: 41) . . ." According to tradition, Veronica was a woman who followed Jesus on the way to Calvary and wiped His face with her veil. This is commemorated in the sixth Station of the Cross. Finally, Mary of Cleophas also stood at the foot of the cross as Jesus died (John 19: 25).

Before Miguel Arcángel, or Jacob Gallo, left the plains of the Tierra Santa, Epifanio had envisioned him as his successor: "El patriarca veía realizadas en el hijo la fuerza y la maña, juntas: la fuerza bruta y la soterrada: lo que más tarde habría de dividir en dos personas: Felipe y Jesús. No le cabía duda: Miguel Arcángel estaba hecho para sucederlo en la jefatura de la heredad (78)." The fact that he has two names is quite significant in that these two names symbolically bring out this dual aspect of his character: strength and cunning. Obviously the name Miguel Arcángel stands for the strength aspect; this has already been stressed in the section dealing with the angels. However, the brute strength of Miguel Arcángel is very much played down through most of Las tierras flacas. The Tierra Santa inhabitants wait hundreds of pages for Miguel Arcángel to take violent action against the Trujillos, but nothing happens. It is the cunning aspect of his character which dominates, and in this respect his second name, Jacob Gallo, is especially significant. Cunning was certainly a trait of the Biblical Jacob; not only did he trick his brother Esau out of his birthright (Gen. 25: 27-34) and his father's blessing (Gen. 27: 18-29), but he also tricked his father-in-law Laban out of his flock of sheep (Gen. 30: 31-43). It is therefore appropriate that when Miguel Arcángel returns to the Tierra Santa, he uses the name his mother wanted to give him "porque [Sara] había oído decir que significaba El Fuerte (77)." Esau affords a clue as to the more precise meaning of the word: "Rightly is his name called Jacob; for he hath supplanted me, lo, this second time: my first birthright

he took away before, and now this second time he hath stolen away my blessing (Gen. 27: 36)." Thus, Jacob supplanted those who went before him in whatever way possible.

There are other similarities between Jacob Gallo and his Biblical counterpart. Both display a disdainful attitude toward their brothers. Jacob Gallo, in his absence from the Tierra Santa, has become rich and has begotten a large family, as did the Biblical Jacob. Jacob Gallo had always wanted to return to his homeland: "--Al amo siempre le ha estirado la tierra . . . Allí es donde respira gordo y a sus anchas. Y siempre suspiró por volver al Llano . . . ¿a quién no le gusta ser profeta en su propia tierra? Esto es (218)." Jacob expresses a similar desire: "And when Joseph was born, Jacob said to his father in law: Send me away that I may return into my country, and to my land (Gen. 30: 25)." Also, Jacob Gallo meets with his brothers (135-37) just as Jacob met with Esau in Gen. 33. Jacob Gallo's brother Felipe is the novel's strong man, as was his namesake Philip of Macedonia, father of Alexander the Great (Philip is mentioned briefly in 1 Mach. 1: 1, 6: 2). But Jacob Gallo is not afraid of him because of the Miguel Arcángel aspect of the former's character. In contrast, Jacob was afraid of Esau (Gen. 32: 11). Thus it is seen that the two character traits combined make this individual extremely formidable. Along the same lines, his retention of both names makes him all things to all people in the novel. The people view him as a conqueror (Miguel); simultaneously, the Trujillos, who refer to him as Jacob, must proceed with caution because they do not know what he intends to do. And Yáñez affirms that both

names are an integral part of him by using both names in succession at one point: "Jacob se había adelantado. La raspa de los Trujillos y gentes de los distintos ranchos estaban encandilados con la reaparición de Miguel Arcángel (137)."

Although many different Biblical themes are alluded to in Al filo del agua, those which receive the most emphasis are: 1) punishment from God; 2) Damián and the Prodigal Son; 3) prophecies in the novel; and 4) the symbolism of the number seven.

The previous chapter discussed the prevalent belief among the villagers that God would surely punish earthly misconduct not only in the next world but also on earth. This attitude has its roots in the Old Testament, where the people came to expect God to punish wrongdoing, and their expectations were often fulfilled. Often this was accomplished by a violent act of nature, and the references in the novel to natural disasters help to perpetuate the theme of divine punishment on earth.

One of the most striking examples of this is the authorial commentary following a passionate conversation between Damián and Micaela: "¿Por qué un rayo, en esos momentos, no abatió a cualquiera de los dos desgraciados? ¿Por qué a esa hora no se abrió la tierra y se tragó a Damián (201)?" Many associate the wrathful God of the Old Testament with lightning and earthquakes. Job 1: 16, 4 Kings 1: 10-14, 3 Kings 18: 38 and Num. 11: 1 serve as examples of lightning as His instrument of punishment. Earthquakes as punishment appear in Num. 16: 31-32 and Ps. 60: 4. If such things never happened in the experience of the villagers, perhaps they would not continually

expect it. However, they all know the story of Teófila Parga, founder of the Daughters of Mary in the village, whose fiancé was killed by a bolt of lightning (222). For the villagers, this occurrence brings to life and lends credence to the theory of earthly punishment for the wicked.

References to other, less spontaneous natural phenomena might also be attributed a Biblical origin. The villager who despairingly cries out during the drought "--¿No lloverá siempre (196)?" brings to mind Biblical passages such as "For after some time the torrent was dried up, for it had not rained upon the earth (3 Kings 17: 7)" and "The great ones sent their inferiors to the water: they came to draw, they found no water, they carried back their vessels empty (Jer. 14: 3)." These droughts are instruments of divine punishment. Another such symbol is the wind, the description of which begins the chapter entitled "Los norteños." In Job 1: 19 we read that "A violent wind came on a sudden from the side of the desert, and shook the four corners of the house, and it fell upon thy children and they are dead, and I alone have escaped to tell thee." Perhaps the villagers can be considered a collective Job, losing everything at novel's end. The wind that ruins Job is like the wind in the novel that accompanies the return of the norteños, Mexicans who leave to work in the United States and later return to Mexico critical of some of their people's customs and outlooks on life. Winds can also indicate the arrival and presence of God. The wind of "Los norteños" is angry, but later on winds indicate spiritual inspiration or nourishment, which affects Gabriel: "Gabriel sintió

--sentía-- como si un viento venido de lejanísimas regiones, un viento de la noche, descuajara montañas, poblaciones, ríos; y le golpeara la cara (189) . . ." When compared to the scene of the descent of the Holy Spirit in Acts. 2: 2 ("And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a violent wind blowing . . ."), it is seen that just as the Holy Spirit is an enlightenment, so Gabriel is to be "enlightened" to the outside world with the arrival of Victoria and her money to send him to music school. This New Testament reference is not negative, but hopeful, and in like manner the reader should feel new hope with respect to Gabriel's situation. For the villagers, however, the arrival of Victoria, like that of the norteños, is a punishment, consistent with the Old Testament mentality.

Another New Testament reference, the four horsemen of the Apocalypse, appears several times throughout the novel, and reinforces its atmosphere of punishment and fear. The author mentions them for the first time in the "Acto Preparatorio (9)." Later on they begin to appear frequently as the novel draws to a close, portending disaster. The first example appears on page 289:

> Como pájaros locos, puestos en última desesperación, a ciegas, como pájaros perdidos, los deseos van a estrellarse contra las cruces, contra la cantera de las portadas, contra los muros; correteados por los cuatro jinetes de las postrimerías, fantasmas ubicuos que lo mismo salen a la calle, que no se apartan de los cuatro lados de la cama donde la doncella desuela sus deseos y sus miedos . . . --'¿No te acuerdas de mí?' -- dice la muerte . . .

The reader is later reminded of this same passage: "Los nervios de Marta reproducen las quejas de Mercedes, tan apegadamente, que

la hacen desfallecer, y así la sorprende, por primera vez, el espectro de Micaela, que le dice: --'¿No te acuerdas de mí (308-9)?"

The last allusion to the four horsemen is by Lucas Macías in the final chapter, "El cometa de Halley": "El susto que tienen por todas partes con eso de lo del cometa; por algo les estoy diciendo todo el santo día, que no sólo guerra, sino peste y hambre vamos a tener (323) . . ." From this point on the comet takes over as the dominant symbol of divine punishment in the novel. In the previous passage it is linked with the four horsemen; farther along, it is associated with natural disasters: "¿Qué relación había para el común del pueblo entre aquellos viajeros, el fabuloso anuncio de un cometa, los rumores de sismos, calamidades, revoluciones y peligros en lugares que podían ser muy remotos o próximos (329)?" The Biblical affinity with Halley's comet cannot be the star of Bethlehem, but rather the much-discussed star of Jacob, which foretells destruction: "A <u>star shall rise</u> out of Jacob and a scepter shall spring up from Israel: and shall strike the chiefs of Moab, and shall waste all the children of Seth. And he shall possess Idumea: the inheritance of Seir shall come to their enemies, but Israel shall do manfully. Out of Jacob shall he come that shall rule, and shall destroy the remains of the city (Num. 24: 17-19)."

Just as Yáñez sees fit to have the winds symbolize both punishment (for the villagers) and inspiration (for Gabriel), so too he allows conflicting interpretations of the arrival of Halley's comet to enter the pages of the novel. Gabriel's inspiration and

salvation (Victoria) came from the outside; similarly, positive symbolism regarding the comet is suggested in a letter from Guadalajara written by an astronomer priest. With reference to the comet, he quotes Ps. 19: 2: "Coeli enarrant gloriam Dei (340)." This implies that the comet represents the glory of God, and the priest reiterates this farther along by quoting 2 Cor. 2: 9: "En verdad de verdad no hay palabras para describir la magnificencia del astro y me contento con repetir aquel texto de las Sagradas Escrituras: 'Quod oculus non vidit, nec auris audivit, nec in cor hominis ascendit, quae preparavit Deux iis qui diligunt illum (340-1) . . .'" This priest would surely not be at home in the village, and is an example of healthy Catholicism. The fact that he quotes these passages to combat superstitious misconceptions is evident toward the end of the letter: "Espero que todos estos acontecimientos no hayan dado pábulo en el pueblo a supersticiones y temores punibles, propios de personas indoctas (341) . . ." The fact that a priest is speaking lends authority to his point of view, strengthening the case against the villagers. Also, here positive Latin quotations appear, contrasting with the negative Latin quotations with which the village priests have armed themselves elsewhere in the novel. This letter should be construed as authorial commentary, through the priest, on the villagers' lamentable preoccupation with divine punishment.

Yáñez applies the theme of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15: 11-32) to Al filo del agua in order to contrast the spirit of forgiveness of the father with the unwillingness of the villagers to forgive Damián. In a way, Damián is a combination of the two sons in the

parable. Like the faithful son, he is "sin vicios, entero en trabajos y fatigas (17)." However, Damián "había caído en la tentación de conocer el Norte (17)," and thus leaves his father's house, as does the Prodigal Son. Whereas the latter is received with open arms on his return, the villagers do not view Damián's return from the north in a favorable light.

The story of the Prodigal Son intends to represent not only the infinite mercy of God on the allegorical level, but also demonstrates that the Church Militant should show compassion toward its fellow man. Perhaps this point is lost on the villagers because during the spiritual exercises the story of the Prodigal Son is lumped together with meditations on the fearsome aspects of religion (58). On the following page, there is a reference to "las miserias del Pródigo que toma envidia de lo que comen los puercos a su cuidado (59)." This corresponds to Luke 15: 16: "And he longed to fill himself with the pods that the swine were eating, but no one offered to give them to him." Again, the emphasis falls on the unpleasant aspect of the parable; but, in antithesis, its positive message is relayed a few pages later, when the man with the "worst reputation" in the village, this particular year the drunkard Donato, repeats Luke 15: 18: "Me levantaré e iré a mi padre (66)." The message is that the participants in the spiritual exercises, like the Prodigal Son and Donato, can also repent. Perhaps it is significant that at first Donato was "bajo una [sic] ramas de encino (66)." This reminds one of the angels of the Lord who appeared to Gedeon under an oak tree (Judg. 6: 11). Thus, in

addition to representing the Prodigal Son, Donato is a messenger of the Lord who brings the message of God's infinite mercy, synthesized in a passage read farther on: "Todavía lejos avistóle su Padre, y enterneciéronsele las entrañas, y corriendo a su encuentro le echó los brazos al cuello (66)."[11] Tragically, this message goes unheeded.

One of the most obvious features of the Old Testament is its prophetic nature. This has special importance in Las tierras flacas, but is also reflected in Al filo del agua. Although Lucas Macías is the primary prophetic figure in the novel, three priests briefly assume the role of prophet as well. The first prophecy of Al filo del agua is uttered by don Dionisio: "Nos esperan días tristes, días de calamidad, y nada puede regocijarnos (67)." It is one of the first examples of reader preparation for the novel's tragic conclusion, in the form of a "profética visión."[12] It has the character of a vision, or revelation, in that don Dionisio feels it but can give no specific reason for it. Ironically, the people regard Father Islas, not don Dionisio, as the village prophet after the former forecasts the eventual downfall of the village as the consequence of Damián Limón's return: "Luego vino el desastrado caso de Damián y Micaela, que robusteció la temerosa autoridad del Padre Islas . . . ¿Cómo no había de robustecerla, si todo el pueblo tuvo en él un evidente caso de profecía (221)?" As the novel progresses, however, it becomes increasingly evident that Damián is not responsible for the ultimate disaster that befalls the village. In his letter in the final chapter, the astronomer priest from

Guadalajara, by mentioning an upcoming eclipse of the moon, unwittingly alludes to the village's "day of reckoning," and links it to the attitudes of the people (341). In the Bible, eclipses of the moon are mentioned several times in connection with a day of reckoning (Is. 13: 9-10; Ezech. 32: 7; Joel 3: 15; Matt. 24: 29; Mark 13: 24). In the novel, the villagers superstitiously regard them as bad omens, and the priest warns against this attitude in the letter. Thus, this indirect prophecy ties in the destruction of the village with the attitudes of the villagers, thereby shifting the blame for what happens to where it rightfully belongs.

It has already been noted that Yáñez occasionally allows enlightened commentary on the novel's situation to come from outside the village, an example of which is the letter of the astronomer priest. Lucas Macías, in the role of a prophet, also comes across as a somewhat detached figure, independent of the influence of the priests. As a result, his prophecies, in the mind of the reader, achieve an objectivity which lends an overwhelming inevitability to the downfall of the village way of life. This reader preparation is more noticeable than don Dionisio's original prophecy, which is likely to go relatively unnoticed at that point in the novel. As a prelude to a succession of prophecies, the reader is duly convinced of Lucas' virtual infallibility in the chapter "El viejo Lucas Macías," and even the author himself expresses wonderment at his ability: "¿Cómo adivina las cosas Lucas Macías (141)?"

The prophecies then follow one another at regular intervals. One example is the retelling of the story of the destruction of the

Degollado theater (169), followed by a significantly ominous statement from Lucas: "yo no sé qué cosa extraña noto, como si el mundo se fuera ya a acabar (170) . . ." In Matt. 24: 2 Christ foretells the destruction of the temple: "Do you see all these things? Amen I say to you, there will not be left here one stone upon another that will not be thrown down." Thirteen verses later He predicts the destruction of Jerusalem (Matt. 24: 15-22). Although Lucas leaves the destruction of the village unsaid, the connotation is very strong.

Later on, another of Lucas' prophecies again reminds the reader of Matthew's gospel, as well as the four horsemen of the Apocalypse:

> --Ni duda cabe que habrá ya no digo revolución, sino guerras, hambre y peste --profetiza Lucas enfáticamente, por todos lados; acogiendo las opiniones de Pascual, añade--: Cuando salen los apóstoles, el mundo los llama locos, les avientan piedras los muchachos, las autoridades los ponen presos; pero nadie los puede callar, nadie los podrá detener (281).

At this point Lucas becomes more specific, having compared Christ's apostles to the followers of Madero on the previous page. Lucas' final utterance above parallels Matt. 10: 16-22, where Christ warns the apostles that they will be persecuted, but will eventually triumph. This is a direct presage of the victory of Madero.

By this time the reader can hardly remain unconvinced that Lucas is a prophetic figure. However, the author applies the finishing touches in Lucas' story of the guerrilla Espiridión Ramos:

> Quién había de decirle al famoso Espiridión Ramos, compañero de Antonio Rojas, el que hizo temblar la tierra cuando los franceses, quién había de decirle que lo desenterrarían para que en el mismo agujero en que se pudrió, sepultaran a don Timoteo Limón, que como ustedes han de saber, fué hijo de don Arcadio, mismo a quien Espiridión, después de matarlo, quería que no lo enterraran, y porfió hasta que el cuerpo apestaba (302) . . .

Here Lucas, the prophet, speaks of a trembling earth and a stinking corpse in the same paragraph. Similarly, three prophets: Elias, Isaias, and Jeremias, combine these two concepts in the Bible. Perhaps the reason Lucas said that the earth trembled was because God was angry with Espiridión. Against Achab and Jezabel, God tells Elias what to do amidst an earthquake (3 Kings 19: 11), and later on it is seen that neither Achab nor Jezabel are to be buried when they die (3 Kings 21: 23-24), also an indication of God's anger. In threatening punishment against Israel, Isaias and Jeremias link the concepts as well (See Is. 13: 13; 24: 18-19; 34: 3; 66: 24; Jer. 4: 24; 7: 33; 14: 16; 16: 4; 19: 7; 22: 19; 25: 33).

Finally, Lucas mentions hailstorms in his final prophecy: "--¡Estamos en el filo del agua! Usted cuídese: pase lo que pase, no se aflija, señor cura; será una buena tormenta y a usted le darán los primeros granizazos: ¡hágase fuerte (376)!" In the Old Testament, hailstorms are mentioned in connection with the fall of Samaria (Is. 28: 2, 17) and the destruction of Assyria (Is. 30: 30). They also appear as instruments of destruction in Ex. 9: 18-34, Josue 10: 11, and Ezech. 38: 22.

The final Biblical theme to be discussed with regard to Al filo del agua involves the symbolism of the number seven. On this

point, McKenzie states that "the significance of 7 in the Bible is fairly obvious; it means totality, fullness, completeness."[13] Yáñez adheres to this symbolism in Al filo del agua, and although it does not play a significant part in the interpretation of the novel, it does draw the reader's attention through repetition. Aside from appearing in connection with Church liturgy (seven sacraments, seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, etc.) and in reference to the seven sorrows of Mary (see previous chapter, pp. 85-86), the number seven also is seen in places which seem to reflect the Biblical symbolism of completeness. We see that on Palm Sunday, Luis Gonzaga Pérez "siete veces ha puesto la cabeza dentro del aguamanil rebosante (92)"; the village has a ritual for Holy Thursday called "la visita de las Siete Casas (103)"; the final utterances of Christ on the cross (Matt. 27: 46; Luke 23: 43, 46; John 19: 26-28, 30) are referred to as "las Siete Palabras (123)"; and Damián kills Orión on the seventh of August (260), indicating that his lack of patience is now complete, and that he can no longer tolerate the atmosphere in the village without resorting to violence.

The most dominant Biblical themes in evidence with respect to Las tierras flacas are: 1) idol worship; 2) punishment from God; 3) patriarchal and prophetic figures; and 4) Cain and Abel and the Prodigal Son.

There are many examples of idol worship in the Old Testament. Perhaps the best known incident is when Aaron and the Jews construct a golden calf in the desert while Moses is on Mount Sinai (Ex. 32).

One basic reason for the reliance on these false gods is impatience on the part of the Jews for their deliverance; the recurring cycle of impatience, recourse to idols and repentance is constantly repeated. This impatience becomes particularly acute in the absence of a leader, Moses in the case referred to above, and the Messiah in general.

A similar impatience exists in Las tierras flacas: impatience with Epifanio Trujillo's dominance, methods of operation, and contempt for organized religion. The Tierra Santa had always been without priests to lead the people in their religious practices, and when Teófila dies, the people feel they have lost one of their few sources of hope. In desperation, they turn to adoration of the sewing machine in the hope that it can do what no one else, not even Matiana, has been able to accomplish. The fervor with which Merced and others worship the machine reflects the extent of their desperation. Upon its return, "Merced corrió, se prosternó, besó con avidez la máquina, soltó el estrépito del llanto (337)."

In fact, the sewing machine truly dominates the novel, for it is the primary motivating factor in the actions of many of the characters, and is indirectly responsible for the succession of conflicts not involving Miguel Arcángel. As the people begin to see that things are suddenly happening on the Tierra Santa, perhaps they delude themselves into thinking that, after all, the machine may very well be responsible. However, just as the Old Testament idols are not responsible for any future successes by the Jews, so the sewing machine, in the final analysis, can only be a sewing

machine. Miguel Arcángel is the real reason for the changes and progress on the Tierra Santa.

In Las tierras flacas, reiteration of the basic concept of divine punishment on earth for one's sins often involves no specific Biblical reference; however, Yáñez' treatment of this concept is basically similar in both novels. For instance, on page 72 Epifanio alludes to an earthquake ("ni se me hubiera venido encima el cerro de la Tapona"), and there are several references to lightning, both as an instrument of destruction (21, 72, 86, 235, 287, 334) and as a symbol of the presence of God (360).

In addition to the above, other references to natural disasters and destruction appear that involve Biblical parallels. One such reference is destruction by fire, in the form of a prophecy by Teódulo: "Un día la Divina Providencia se cansará y hará llover fuego en esos malditos pueblos (28)." Of course, this refers to the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrha (Gen. 19: 24; Deut. 29: 23; Wis. 10: 6-7). In fact, this prophecy is partially fulfilled when Damasco is burned (337). Finally, there are two other references of similar focus that appear in the novel. When Teódulo attributes the arrival of previously unknown diseases on the Tierra Santa to punishment from God (28), one is reminded of Num. 12: 11-12, in which Aaron attributes his wife Mary's leprosy to committed sin. And near the end of the novel, Merced claims that the sewing machine "redujo a cenizas los lugares de sus abominaciones; hizo polvo las últimas murallas de sus injusticias (346)." Dust sometimes symbolizes the ruins of destruction in the Bible, as in Is. 47: 1:

"Come down, sit in the dust, O virgin daughter of Babylon, sit on the ground: there is no throne for the daughter of the Chaldeans, for thou shalt no more be called delicate and tender."

The only other distinctive feature of the application of the theory of divine punishment on earth for earthly misdeeds in Las tierras flacas is that several times it is directed at a specific individual: Epifanio. These references appear frequently after his death (289, 322-23, 339). This first reference describes the attitude of the people regarding the death of Epifanio:

> El desencanto es de los que habían alimentado la figuración de que don Epifanio Trujillo tendría una muerte de mayor escarmiento: a manos de sus hijos, o en medio de prolongados tormentos que le causara asquerosa, misteriosa enfermedad, por decreto de Matiana; o fulminado por un coraje, delante de testigos numerosos. Los defraudados comprendían en su desengaño a Matiana, por inservible para cumplir su antiguo ministerio de vengadora celestial: por poco el rayo le cae a ella. La forma en que Trujillo había topado con su fin, en su cama, durmiendo tranquilamente su siesta, era el colmo (289).

This bitter realization of the truth regarding the fate of the wicked on earth compares favorably with Job 21: 7-34, especially Job's observation that the wicked "spend their days in wealth, and in a moment they go down to hell,"[14] instead of dying an agonizing death. At this point the author takes the opportunity to refute this so often-repeated misconception; it is appropriate that in this case the Biblical parallel involves Job, since this book contrasts strikingly with other sections of the Old Testament involving direct intervention by a wrathful God.

In Las tierras flacas, it is appropriate to draw the distinction between patriarchs (heads of families or tribes) and prophets (those who predict the future through divine inspiration) in discussing the novel's relationship to the Bible. In general, Teódulo and Matiana exhibit the characteristics of both, whereas Epifanio Trujillo is more reminiscent of a patriarch than a prophet. And in the author's unusual treatment of the Cain and Abel theme, Epifanio is likened to Adam.

Teódulo, Rómulo's grandfather, appears in the novel, in Rómulo's interior monologues, as the origin of a family tree. He is seen giving advice to his offspring, and since Rómulo looks up to him in the initial stages of the novel, so does the reader. Rómulo does not question his wisdom, and his lofty position is established early in what Rómulo calls "el sermón de aquel día en la montaña (20)." This sermon does not greatly resemble Christ's Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5-7), other than the fact that both preach fidelity to one woman and lack of concern with the attainment of material riches. Its purpose is to strengthen Teódulo's familial position of authority in order to remind the reader of a patriarchal figure.

To further heighten Teódulo's prestige, it is noted that one of his prophecies, that of correctly predicting the arrival of Halley's comet (18), appears to impress Rómulo. In addition, the reader tends to lend credence to Teódulo's prophecy of destruction by fire (28), already quoted earlier. But then a prophecy of disaster to those who mine gold (29) immediately follows, and this strikes the reader as rather ridiculous. From then on it becomes

evident that Teódulo is a slave to habit and tradition, a symbol of the old ways which are to be inevitably changed. His image starts out as being similar to that of Lucas Macías in Al filo del agua, but whereas Lucas impresses with his uncanny insights, Teódulo unavoidably fails to make his mark on the reader.

Although Matiana ultimately fails as well to be the determining factor in directing the course of life on the Tierra Santa, she holds a certain fascination for the reader for most of the novel; also, she is the matriarchal figure that the people most identify with. This patriarchal image is initially established in a way similar to the case of Teódulo, when Matiana climbs la Tapona and supposedly speaks with God (92). This resembles Moses' ascent to Mount Sinai to speak several times with God (Ex. 19-32). Other, more specific similarities between the two incidents exist. Matiana went up "con la mortandad a cuestas . . . y le hablé a Dios . . . y le dije que ya estaba bueno de castigo, y le pedí que depusiera su cólera y amarrara otra vez al Diablo (92) . . ." Before spending forty days and nights on Mount Sinai, Moses offered holocausts (Ex. 24: 5); later, he intervened twice for his people while on the mountain:

> But Moses besought the Lord his God, saying: Why, O Lord, is thy indignation kindled against thy people, whom thou hast brought out of the land of Egypt, with great power, and with a mighty hand (Ex. 32: 11)?
>
> And returning to the Lord, he said: I beseech thee: this people hath sinned a heinous sin, and they have made to themselves gods of gold: either forgive them this trespass, or if thou do not, strike me out of the book that thou hast written (Ex. 32: 31-32).

Later, this parallel between Matiana and Moses is established once more in one of the versions of the encounter between Matiana and Jesusito: "un resplandor de lumbre cubrió a don Jesusito la vista de la Madre (223) . . ." The reader is reminded of the Pharoah's army attempting to cross the Red Sea, and a pillar of fire protecting Moses (Ex. 14: 23-27). Jesusito's horse deposits him on the opposite bank from Matiana, and symbolically he fails to cross the stream.

Matiana claims to have direct correspondence with God, and supposedly acts as his intermediary on the plains. She says that "de arriba vienen los castigos conforme a mis juicios (93) . . ." and speaks of acting "conforme a Santísimos Designios de los Poderes Invisibles (305)." As such, she is considered to be directly protected by God, and appears to have the powers of nature at her disposal. In addition to the example of protection by the Eye of Providence already quoted on page 137, the author mentions her "misión escarmentadora que Dios le había confiado" in connection with "rayos y centellas (235)." And near the end of the novel, she confronts Plácida with "ojos y lengua tronantes, hierática (331) . . ."

This last example illustrates that Yáñez himself contributes to the affinity between Matiana and the supernatural. However, it is significant that Matiana also attributes these powers to herself, and before believing her the reader must compare her claims with the facts. Matiana also states that she is a prophet, as evidenced by her use of the word "zahorín (304)." In fact, her only prophecy is her prediction that the Revolution would not reach the Tierra Santa, but would stop at Cardos (94); but again, she herself informs us of this prophecy, and we have to accept her word.

All this does not mean, however, that Matiana deliberately tries to give a false impression of possessing extraordinary powers. In one interior monologue she relates how the people sometimes come to her, expecting her to work miracles such as raising the dead to life (142). This is another comparison with the Biblical prophets: At one point Elias resuscitates a widow's son (3 Kings 17: 17-24), and Eliseus brings to life a dead child (4 Kings 4: 18-37) and a dead man cast into the sepulchre of Eliseus (4 Kings 13: 20-21). In this section of the novel Matiana points out her limitations in connection with God's will: "Yo no me determino sola y Dios no siempre se vale de mí, no diario me ilumina, por más que viendo las necesidades yo se lo pida con ganas de remediarlas (142)." Still, this self-limitation is only partial, since she regards herself as God's agent. In the end the reader is forced to conclude that Matiana's effect on the ultimate life style of the region does not correspond to the considerable buildup she receives and, to a degree, creates. Ironically, the most significant "prophecy" in terms of the inevitable triumph of progress in the Tierra Santa has no Biblical aura about it at all: Miguel Arcángel's prediction of rain (271). By this time progress is imminent, and the Biblical atmosphere of Las tierras flacas begins to slowly decline.

Epifanio Trujillo's image is that of a Biblical patriarch, not a prophet. The only prophetical allusion concerning Epifanio occurs when he says he was "transportado a la gloria" by Gabriel Martínez' music (133), as Elias was "carried up to heaven" in a fiery chariot (4 Kings 2: 11). But Epifanio utters no prophecies in the novel;

this is appropriate in the sense that for this man to utter prophecies later realized in fact would border on the antireligious. Yáñez does not wish to condemn religion, and does not wish to present Epifanio's scorn for organized religion as something admirable.

Very directly, the author refers to Epifanio as a "patriarca (45, 77)" with a "plan patriarcal (47, 67)." The overriding affinity consists in his insistence on practicing polygamy. The fact that he is a polygamist, although he never married, is first brought to the reader's attention on pages 45-46. Epifanio begins his justification of this practice a few pages later, while at the same time implying disdain for those who practice their religion: "más mujeres tuvieron Noé y sus hijos, patriarcas y profetas, y ni quien les dijera nada, ni los que besan la Biblia, donde dicen que por escrito consta el gusto de tantos santos varones (52) . . ." As already seen, the names of most of Epifanio's women are also those of the wives of various Biblical patriarchs. Finally, even after his death, in an imaginary interior monologue devised by the author, he continues to insist that his practice of polygamy was one of his most admirable traits, speaking of "el gozo . . . de poder crear . . . con apetito nunca saciado por la hermosura del acto creador (276) . . ." Four sentences later he quotes something he once heard in church: "Alguna vez oí celebrar en la iglesia del pueblo a no sé quién por tener descendencia numerosa como ramas de vid, o estrellas del cielo, arenas del mar, o algo parecido (276) . . ." This refers to the patriarch Abraham, and is quite similar to Gen. 22: 17: "I will bless thee, and I will multiply

thy seed as the stars of heaven, and as the sand that is by the sea shore . . ." These similes are also reflected in Gen. 15: 5; 32: 12. Perhaps Epifanio's arguments on this page momentarily elicit the reader's sympathy and serve to enhance his point of view; but this advantage is immediately undermined slightly when he says that "San Abraham, San Jacob, San David, San Salomon y otros muchos tuvieron pilas de mujeres (276)." First, one does not normally apply the title of saint to a Biblical patriarch; and the expression "pilas de mujeres" is certainly accurate in the case of Solomon, and perhaps David, but is a gross exaggeration in reference to Abraham and Jacob. Thus, this statement reflects Epifanio's ignorance of the Bible.

Another aspect of Epifanio's patriarchal nature has to do with the complete authority he exercises over the region before the arrival of Miguel Arcángel: "se siente investido de indiscutible autoridad en materias familiares (46) . . ." He marries and remarries his children (75) and in general completely dominates the lives of his offspring; but perhaps his greatest failure is that of being unable to mold Miguel Arcángel as his successor. His obsession to do this begins when the name Miguel Arcángel is revealed to him in a dream (not an infrequent occurrence with patriarchs in the Old Testament) on page 77. After his failure, St. Michael appears to him in a dream (123-25), which may suggest his preoccupation with not having succeeded. Perhaps his death may have been precipitated in part by the realization that he was to be defeated in the battle that he had most wanted to win.

Thus, the three patriarchal figures in Las tierras flacas all fail to avert the coming of progress to the Tierra Santa. Of the three failures, that of Epifanio is probably the most justified in the reader's mind. And because of Epifanio's great power and authority, it is the strongest indicator of the eventual success of Miguel Arcángel, and of the certain elimination of the Biblical atmosphere that prevails up to the fifth and final section of the novel. Perhaps Epifanio was doomed from the start not to prevail, because of his attempt to superimpose a patriarchal structure which, of all the elements in the novel which were out of step with the times, was the most antiquated of all.

The final Biblical theme in Las tierras flacas to be discussed here is that of family rivalry, as reflected in the themes of Cain and Abel and the Prodigal Son. While not likened to any specific patriarch most of the time, Epifanio does assume the role of Adam in the following observation by Yáñez: "Había quedado en pie una lucha . . . entre cuñas del mismo palo --Adán, Caín y Abel-- (198) . . ." The author wishes to present this as a main Biblical theme, but as reflected in the novel it involves not merely "hermanos contra hermanos (188)," but also "hijos contra padres (188)." In light of this, one has to equate Epifanio with Adam, Felipe and Jesusito with Cain, and Miguel Arcángel with Abel.

The pastorals in the chapter "En Belén los pastores y había luna" reenact several Biblical stories in succession, including that of Cain and Abel (192). It is Miguel Arcángel who incorporates Cain and Abel into the program on the sly; his intention is to

allude to the situation which will soon exist in the Tierra Santa region. Suddenly, the skits switch all the way from Cain and Abel to the New Testament and the birth of Christ (193). Two implications can be drawn from this. First, that Miguel regards a family feud as a necessary step toward achieving eventual progress. Similarly, in Matt. 10: 21-22 Christ warns the apostles of intra-family divisions attendant upon acceptance of Him: "And brother will hand over brother to death, and the father his child; children will rise up against parents and put them to death. And you will be hated by all for my name's sake; but he who has persevered to the end will be saved." Second, the radical jump to the New Testament in the skit foreshadows the coming of progress. Miguel sees himself as a prime instrument of the change, since he turns out to be one of the three Wise Men, and bears gifts (196).

The application of the Cain and Abel theme (Gen. 4) to Las tierras flacas necesitates a distortion of Biblical facts. In the Bible, Adam does not play a direct role in the dispute between the two brothers. On the other hand, in the novel the name Adam is associated with Cain and Abel, because Epifanio plays a central role in the power struggle. In the Bible, of course, Cain kills Abel. The radically different adaptation in the novel is summed up in one of the comments from the crowd: "--Harán el cuento de Caín y Abel en que nuestro padre Adán es el que a su hijo mata (188)." In the novel, Miguel is not killed by anyone except perhaps in a symbolic vein. In a sense, Epifanio "kills" Miguel in that he drives him from the Tierra Santa. This may be yet another way

in which Yáñez attacks Epifanio, by twisting around the story of Cain and Abel in order to accuse the patriarch of a moral crime.

One further point needs to be cleared up. Miguel Arcángel returns to the Tierra Santa, according to one version, for vengeance: "Que ha jurado vengarse de toda su parentela (200) . . ." In Gen. 4: 23-24 Lamech warns of vengeance to be taken on Cain. If it is true that Miguel is out for vengeance, and if he had been figuratively dead, then he would have to be symbolically raised to life in order to carry out his vengeance. This could explain Matiana's cryptic references to him as "Jacob Gallo, el resucitado (153)" and "Miguel Arcángel, resucitado (154)."

There are several examples of the affinity in the people's mind between Miguel Arcángel and the Prodigal Son. Rómulo makes the first brief comparison (107), and others follow (138, 188). If one prefers to think of Miguel's return in terms of altruism or sense of duty rather than vengeance, his comparison with the Prodigal Son is more appropriate, since it implies no base motives. The Prodigal Son theme seems to be one of Yáñez' favorites, since it appears in Al filo del agua, Las tierras flacas, and also Archipiélago de mujeres.[15] The comparisons between the Prodigal Son and Damián in Al filo del agua, and Miguel Arcángel in Las tierras flacas, involve variations of the original Biblical story which are similar in that neither Damián nor Miguel leave with a fortune, nor does either return willing to surrender to his father. One possible difference between the two cases pertains to whether or not each man would have been pardoned had he humbled himself.

Damián's father and the villagers of Al filo del agua in all probability would have never fully accepted him. The case of Las tierras flacas is more doubtful. At one point Epifanio expresses anger that Miguel did not ask his pardon for marrying Florentina, but implies that he would have forgiven him, and is even still hoping for an apology:

> Otro gallo cantara, si cuando por lo de la Florentina ésa quise castigarlo quitándole casa y tierras, viene y se me humilla, me pide perdón . . . ¡Ah, si todavía ora me diera una satisfacción, reconociendo sus descarríos, arrepintiéndose, pondría todos mis bienes a su nombre, lo repondría en el destino que le asigné mucho antes de que naciera, mucho antes de que yo conociera a Sara, su madre (213) . . .

And later on, Epifanio is tempted to pardon Miguel in any case: "Después del desastre, caigo en la tentación de perdonar a Miguel Arcángel, aunque no me lo pida, y de arrimarme a él, y entregarle cuanto soy y valgo (233)." It is to the detriment of Epifanio that he feels motivated by necessity, and that he never actually forgives him; but here the reader at least catches a glimpse of repentance in the man, and admires him momentarily.

A selective approach has been chosen in dealing with other explicit and implicit Biblical references in Al filo del agua and Las tierras flacas not included previously in this chapter. An attempt has been made to discuss only certain passages which contribute significantly to the understanding of the two works.

Explicit Biblical references in Al filo del agua:

Page 100: "¿Dónde está la sala en que he de celebrar la Pascua con mis discípulos? Y él os mostrará un cenáculo grande, alfombrado, y allí preparad la cena . . . Con gran deseo he querido comer esta Pascua con vosotros antes de mi Pasión, pues os aseguro que no he de volver a comerla." These are the words of Christ instructing His disciples to prepare for the Last Supper (Luke 22: 11-12), followed by the opening words of the Supper (Luke 22: 15-16). These words are presented in italics as part of all the people's subconscious, and are used to justify their eating so much on Holy Thursday. They gladly emulate this part of the Gospel, but in the next sentence the author presents another excerpt from the Last Supper: "Amaos los unos a los otros . . . En esto conocerán que sois mis discípulos." This is found in John 13: 35; the people know it equally well, but obviously pay little attention to it. This sharp contrast reflects the conscience of the author censuring the people, and makes the latter quotation stand out. The implication is that all religious deeds have a hollow, limited significance without love.

Page 107: "En verdad el Hijo del hombre se va, como está escrito; mas ay del hombre por quien será entregado: mejor le fuera no haber nacido." Don Dionisio quotes Matt. 26: 24 in reference to Judas as part of a no-compromise, hard line approach in his sermons. It is significant that this appears in Matthew's gospel immediately preceding Christ's passion and death. Similarly, don Dionisio is soon to suffer intense mental anguish and will

soon meet his downfall. Yáñez paraphrases this quote for the sake of repetition farther along: "Los niños . . . Escuchan frecuentemente la idea de que mejor hubiera sido que no vinieran al mundo (232)."

Page 108: One of the villagers mentions the "Luna de Juicio Final." This association of the moon with a day of judgment is found in several places (Is. 13: 10; Ezech. 32: 7; Joel 2: 31, 3: 15; Matt. 24: 29; Mark 13: 24; Acts 2: 20; Apoc. 6: 12), but it is a sufficiently esoteric concept so that the reader is astounded to hear it in an ordinary conversation. Its inclusion reiterates the notion that the people are very knowledgeable regarding religion, but perhaps in this case Yáñez' tremendous Biblical knowledge imposed on the mind of an average layman borders on the unreal.

Pages 108-109: The recreation of Christ's arrest presented here is a combination of passages from all four gospels, as the division below illustrates:

> El señor cura: --'Dormid ya, y descansad. Basta: llegó la hora: he aquí que el Hijo del hombre será entregado en manos de los pecadores. Levantaos, marchemos; he aquí que el que ha de entregarme, cerca está (Mark 14: 41-42).
>
> --¿A quién buscáis?
> --A Jesús Nazareno.
> --Yo soy.
> Retrocede la chusma y caen por tierra. La voz del señor cura:
> --¿A quién buscáis?
> --A Jesús Nazareno.
> --Ya os he dicho que Yo soy; ahora bien, si me buscáis a Mí, dejad a éstos (John 18: 4-8).
>
> Judas se adelanta y con voz temblorosa, que apenas oyen los que se hallan cerca, dice: --Salve, Maestro, y besa la mejilla de la escultura (Matt. 26: 49).
>
> --¡Oh, amigo! ¿a qué has venido? Judas, ¿con un beso vendes al Hijo del hombre (Luke 22: 48)?

With the exception of the first section, also found in Matt. 26: 45-46, the passages in italics are unique to the respective books indicated. This reflects the people's thoroughness with regard to the preparation of the skit and a desire to put on a unified presentation of the betrayal without omission of any pertinent detail.

Page 146: "Mi amado se ha hecho una viña en una loma muy fértil . . . y construyó en ella un lagar." This quote encompasses Is. 5: 1-2: "My beloved had a vineyard on a hill in a fruitful place. And he fenced it in, and picked the stones out of it, and planted it with the choicest vines and built a tower in the midst thereof, and set up a winepress therein . . ." These verses immediately follow the eighth prophecy of the Holy Saturday service, but are not part of the service, which Luis Gonzaga Pérez is supposedly reading in bed. His inability here to concentrate on the matter at hand is a subtle indication of his state of mind. His consciousness is confused and blurred by past readings not directly pertinent. This also illustrates his tendency to complicate his projects by being too thorough, and this embellishment of a simple reading results in mental chaos.

Page 192: Victoria is metaphorically compared to Eve on the day she is expelled from Paradise. Consistent with the comparison drawn between Gabriel and the archangel, the meetings between Gabriel and Victoria are elevated to a high symbolic supernatural level.

Page 258: "El que a hierro mata, a hierro muere." Christ said this to Peter after the latter had cut off the ear of the servant

of the high priest (Matt. 26: 52). In the novel, it foreshadows Timoteo Limón's upcoming death, since Timoteo had killed Anacleto twenty-five years before.

Page 306: The content of the novena preceding the feast of the Immaculate Conception is paraphrased many times in the love letters circulating in the village, "pues la nutre con su savia el Cántico de los Cánticos." Solomon's Canticle of Canticles is an allegory in the form of a dialogue between two lovers. The fact that portions of this book are quoted in the letters mirrors the extreme rigidity of thought and conduct in the village. Even when they are doing something they consider to be profane and forbidden, those who write the letters feel obliged to quote the Bible. Even if they do it to soothe their consciences, such inclusions are ironic and absurd. Thus the author subtly pokes fun at village attitudes.

Page 374: Lucas expresses his fondness for the history of Judith. Apparently he senses the imminent disaster about to befall the village, and remembers Judith's heroic resistance, aided by the help of God, to the invasion of Bethulia by the armies of Holofernes. He implies that the people of the village should also call upon God to aid them in their resistance to Madero's troops. This attitude is crystallized in Judith 4: 11-16:

> Know ye that the Lord will hear your prayers, if you continue with perseverance in fastings and prayers in the sight of the Lord. Remember Moses the servant of the Lord, who overcame Amalec that trusted in his own strength, and in his power, and in his army, and in his shields, and in his chariots, and in his horsemen, not by fighting with the sword, but

> by holy prayers; so shall all the enemies of Israel be, if you persevere in this work which you have begun. So they being moved by this exhortation of his, prayed to the Lord, and continued in the sight of the Lord. So that even they who offered the holocausts to the Lord, offered the sacrifices to the Lord girded with haircloths, and with ashes upon their head. And they all begged of God with all their heart, that he would visit his people Israel.

The implied pacificism of this passage is consistent with the villagers' idea that the Devil is their only enemy, and that he can be conquered by prayer.

Implicit Biblical references in Al filo del agua:

Page 10: Yáñez states that the typical prospective bride in a village wedding is "una yerba bamboleante y mal tratada." A reed is seen as a symbol of weakness, and as something absorbing the brunt of divine punishment, in 3 Kings 14: 15: "And the Lord God shall strike Israel as a reed is shaken in the water." It is an appropriate metaphor in describing the villagers' view of matrimony. The New Testament continues this symbolism in Matt. 11: 7 and Luke 7: 24.

In Biblical times, according to McKenzie, "the head of the household filled the cups of the family and guests at table; hence the cup becomes a figure of one's lot or portion."[16] In Al filo del agua, the cup appears four times in this regard as a symbol of agony, again consistent with the atmosphere of the novel. Each example alludes to Christ's agony in the garden. First, Mercedes Toledo, in her imagined dialogue with the Devil, says "Señor, aparta de mí, ya, este cáliz. (--Menos amargo, ya . . .) Este cáliz más amargo, insoportablemente amargo (31)." This parallels Matt. 26: 39:

". . . let this cup pass away from me." Later, there is "un ángel que le ofrece un cáliz" to the Lord as part of the Holy Thursday Passion skit (108). Luke 22: 43 relates how an angel comes to comfort Christ in the garden. The chalice refers to verse 42: "Father, if thou art willing, remove this cup from me . . ." Third, after the death of their mother, Timoteo Limón's daughters are secretly happy to be rid of her; their hypocrisy stands out when they publicly state: "'hay que ofrecerle a Dios este trago tan gordo (136).'" Finally, don Dionisio"s way of life having been completely crushed, his stream of thought reflects Matt. 26: 39 in bits and pieces: "transfer calicem . . . transfer calicem . . . verum tamen non mea voluntas . . . omnia tibi posibilia . . . transfer calicem . . . sed non quod ego volo (384) . . ." It is significant that he meditates in Latin, as a small part of his desperate attempt to cling to the past.

Page 84: Here don Dionisio tortures himself with the question "--'¿Qué forasteros vendrán este año a sembrar inquietudes durante los días santos?'" This is almost certainly a reference to the Parable of the Weeds (Matt. 13: 24-30). Just as the weeds in this parable cannot be separated from the wheat until the harvest, don Dionisio is troubled because he fears moral damage will be done in the village, but justice will not come until much later. Ironically, in the novel's other reference to this parable, the reader notes that not an outsider, but Father Reyes and Father Islas sow discord in the village: "Hubo largas disputas que no dejaron de translucir en público, sembrando desasosiego (336)."

Page 141: "--Todo el santo día retumbaron los golpes en el taller de don Gregorio." Christ was a carpenter (Mark 6: 3) as is don Gregorio. The people hear him in his shop in the midst of their great preoccupation with when doña Tacha, Timoteo Limon's wife, is to be buried, if not on Easter Sunday. Thus, their attention is drawn away from the true significance of Easter. Gregorio's noise should remind them that this is the season of Our Lord, and that this is what they should concentrate on. The statement immediately following the above passage affirms this: "Nuestro Señor ha resucitado (141)."

Page 187: "Victoria y Gabriel se vieron sólo cuatro veces." The archangel Gabriel appeared four times in the Bible (Dan. 8: 16-26, 9: 21-27; Luke 1: 11-20, 26-38). Each time he revealed something. Perhaps what is to be similarly "revealed" in the novel is Gabriel's musical talent, although in this respect Victoria, not Gabriel, plays the role of messenger.

Page 224: When Maclovia Ledesma denounces Father Islas after being unjustly censured by the village, "el pueblo comenzó a lanzarle piedras." Just previously (212), don Dionisio had meditated on Christ's generous treatment of the adulterous woman (John 8), which includes the famous statement "Let him who is without sin among you be the first to cast a stone at her (John 8: 7)." This juxtaposition highlights the people's lack of similar generosity toward Maclovia Ledesma and throughout the novel in general.

Page 275: "Hubo sarcasmos para la caja blanca de Micaela." In Matt. 23: 27 Christ declares: "Woe to you, Scribes and Pharisees,

hypocrites! because you are like whited sepulchres, which outwardly appear to men beautiful, but within are full of dead men's bones and of all uncleanness." Similarly, the people detect a certain hypocrisy in Micaela's white coffin, since white often symbolizes purity; but taken in an ironic sense, this could also reflect on the hypocrisy of the people as well. In another way, the whiteness of the coffin should be acceptable to them, consistent with Num. 19: 16 which states that sepulchres were whitened to avoid unclean contact with the body. Finally, this could simply be authorial commentary supporting, at least in part, Micaela's rebellion.

In general, due to the lack of familiarity with the Bible on the part of the Tierra Santa inhabitants, there are fewer explicit Biblical references in Las tierras flacas than in Al filo del agua. Among the most significant are the following:

Page 51: "--Matachicos infelizados por tu culpa, Herodes." The story of King Herod and the Holy Innocents appears in Matt. 2: 16-18. The reason Epifanio Trujillo is likened to Herod is found on the previous page in connection with the high rate of infant mortality on the plain. The people feel Epifanio to be indifferent to the deaths of children. Also, they maintain that he is a prime contributor to infant mortality precisely because of his having fathered so many offspring. This puts Epifanio's insistence on the joy of creation in an ironic light: "En tierra expuesta sin defensas al fatalismo de las enfermedades; en tierra por donde pasa libremente, cuando quiere, el ángel exterminador de niños primogénitos o no, el

ataque a la consolación suelta la sarta vieja de improperios (50) . . ." The reference to "hijos primogénitos" relates to the first-born Egyptians slain in Ex. 12: 30.

Page 52: "Aviente la piedra el que tenga la conciencia tranquila; con la diferencia de que yo hago mis cosas a la luz del día, sin hipocresías ni miedo de nadie y sin ofender a nadie . . ." The author is highly critical of the hypocrisy of the villagers in Al filo del agua, and of Jesusito in Las tierras flacas. Also, it is interesting to note that in this latter work two of Yáñez' spokesmen against this vice are Epifanio and Plácida, hardly paragons of virtue. Admittedly, however, they are not hypocrites. The above passage again brings to mind John 8: 7. On the following page Epifanio reiterates this same concept, this time uniting it with another oft-used example of hypocrisy, Pontius Pilate washing his hands of Christ's fate (Matt. 27: 24):

> . . . hay algunos que tienen su tilma como cernidor, son candil de la calle y oscuridad de su casa, largan a su legítima y a sus hijos, y si te vi, no te conozco; eso sí, avientan la piedra y esconden la mano, o le hacen como Pilatos, enjuagándose hasta el codo (53).

Toward the end of the novel Plácida, Epifanio's successor, makes the same two references in one of her tirades against Miguel Arcángel: "--Sí, ya matando indefensos por la espalda y cargándoselos a la tropa, impusiste terror, tirando la piedra y escondiendo, lavándote las manos, ¡cochino (349)!" At this point the reader wonders whether or not he should agree with Plácida. Since Miguel Arcángel's

thoughts are not presented in interior monologue anywhere in the work, valuable insights into his true character are sometimes lacking where they are desired. The uncertainty of his motives for returning to the Tierra Santa has already been discussed, and now the author poses the question of his hypocrisy or lack of it. This has a slight effect on the reader's judgment as to whether or not the final result in the novel is totally desirable.

Page 209: "--¡Mustio hipócrita! ¿Vienes como el centurión a dar fe de muerto? Habla tú, Felipe: prefiero que me la mientes en vez de oír a este jijodeún persignado." In condemning the hypocrisy of Jesusito, Epifanio alludes to the centurion mentioned right after the death of Christ (Matt. 27: 54; Luke 23: 47). He probably wishes to imply that Jesusito does not dare confront Epifanio openly while the latter is still alive and powerful.

Page 234: "De boca en boca, dominaba en el Llano la sentencia de que toda casa dividida será destruida." This sentence is found in Matt. 12: 25, Mark 3: 25 and Luke 11: 17. The key to its significance in the novel lies in the context in which it appears in the gospels. Christ wished to refute the Scribes' contention that He cast out devils through Beelzebub. In Mark 3: 23-26 Christ responds:

> How can Satan cast out Satan? And if a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. And if a house is divided against itself, that house cannot stand. And if Satan has risen up against himself, he is divided, and cannot stand, but is at an end.

Applying this to Las tierras flacas, it is seen that Epifanio, Felipe, Jesusito and Plácida are all equated with Satan, which may indicate the author's feelings concerning the family feud. Miguel Arcángel does not fall in the same category, because he has renounced his family ties, and has even taken on the name of Jacob Gallo, thereby becoming an independent outside force. Finally, the Biblical passage indicates with certainty that Satan will be at an end. This establishes the inevitable defeat of all the Satan figures, and only Miguel Arcángel is left to seize the victory.

Among the implicit Biblical references in Las tierras flacas, the following stand out:

Page 22: "¡Cómo pueden equivocarse las gentes en años y años, y todo este rumbo, que siempre ha sostenido, probado y recontraprobado lo del entierro . . . de tu tío don Salvador, que nunca ni al gallo de la pasión le dio gota de agua . . ." Besides the explicit reference to the cock that crowed after Peter's denials (Matt. 26: 75; Mark 14: 68, 72; Luke 22: 60; John 18: 27), the phrase "gota de agua" is reminiscent of the story of the rich man in hell who asked Lazarus for a drop of water to cool his tongue (Luke 16: 24). No direct comparison can be drawn between Dives and Rómulo's uncle. But the mere association is likely to be distasteful for Rómulo; thus, Palemón's use of this phrase is not conducive to bringing Rómulo around to his way of thinking.

Page 24: Merced's labor with Teófila "comenzó al venir del ojo de agua con un cántaro al hombro y otro en la mano." In John 4: 5-38 Christ speaks with a Samaritan woman at Jacob's well,

comparing water to life and preaching that His water gives supernatural life. In a sense, Teófila gives supernatural life to the Tierra Santa region when she is born, and this Biblical reference appropriately marks the initial moment of that process.

Page 61: "No fuera que la paloma se espantara, volara otra vez y se la llevaran lejos, antes de que cuajaran mis buenas intenciones . . ." Epifanio compares Teófila to a dove because of her innocence, but his fear that she will figuratively fly away never to return is not consistent with the dove's natural instinct to return home. However, an exception takes place in the Old Testament when Noe sends out a dove from the ark three times, and the third time the bird does not return: "And he stayed yet another seven days: and he sent forth the dove, which returned not any more unto him (Gen. 8: 12)." This is a final element of comparison between Epifanio and Noe; other elements already discussed are the list of animals (42) and Epifanio's statements regarding polygamy (52). The patriarch continues to use the dove metaphor on page 62 ("Donde vuela el gavilán no aletea la paloma") and page 71 ("La paloma se me quedó mirando con lástima").

Page 71: Epifanio reminisces about what happened to him two days before Teófila's death: "me cayó el rayo, juntito de mí, matándome a la yegua Golondrina." Although the corresponding Biblical text says nothing specific about a horse, Epifanio's experience resembles the moment of Saul's conversion (Acts 9: 3-9, 26: 12-20). This forewarns the reader that Epifanio will then proceed to describe his temporary "conversion" by Teófila. She was

the only person who ever tempted him to change his ways and participate in formal religious practices. Also as an indication of Teófila's profound influence on him, Epifanio declares that "con la muerte de Teófila me cambió hasta el color del sol; el aire olía distinto (73) . . ." Among the many similar Biblical quotes, Luke 23: 45 describes the darkening of the sun when Christ expires, and Apoc. 9: 2 also mentions contamination of the air in connection with the day of judgment: "And he opened the bottomless pit, and there came up smoke out of the pit like the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by the smoke of the pit."

Page 93: Matiana laments that Satan and other evil spirits "constantemente dan vueltas al Llano, cada vez con más fuerza, para la perdición de las almas, amén." This passage reinforces the association between the Devil and the airplane, and somewhat parallels 1 Pet. 5: 8: "Be sober, be watchful! For your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, goes about seeking someone to devour." When initially told about the airplane or flying Devil (80), Matiana apparently has this same passage in mind when she assumes that there has been a victim: "--¿A qué cristiano se le llegó (80)?" This indicates the extent of her fear of the power of the Devil.

Page 151: According to Miguel Arcángel, "sería echarme sal" for Matiana not to accept the money he offers her. Farther down on the same page the concept is repeated: "no me eche sal, negándose a recibirme la ofrenda." The corresponding Biblical passage is a very strong statement: "for everyone shall be salted

with fire, and every victim shall be salted (Mark 9: 48)." It has already been noted on page 153 of this dissertation that, as in Judg. 9: 45, the expression "echar sal" is also used in connection with the destruction of Jerusalén. Given the Biblical atmosphere of the novel, one might reasonably regard Miguel's use of the salt metaphor as equally strong. Therefore his words imply that he is not merely disappointed, but crushed, at Matiana's attitude. As such, his statements smack of insincerity, considering the crisp, matter-of-fact, businesslike fashion in which he carries the conversation.

In Las tierras flacas, as in Al filo del agua, the moon appears as a symbol of foreboding, but because of its brightness, not its darkness. The brilliance of the moon is alluded to constantly (159, 173, 180) in the chapter "En Belén los pastores y había luna." In Is. 30: 25-26 we have a prophecy of doom followed by a promise of redemption:

> And there shall be upon every high mountain, and upon every elevated hill, rivers of running waters in the day of the slaughter of many, when the tower shall fall. And the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days: in the day when the Lord shall bind up the wound of his people and shall heal the stroke of their wound.

The final pages of Al filo del agua offer little hope for the redemption of the village in comparison with the early promise of hope as reflected in the bright moon of the Tierra Santa. Progress arrives within the pages of the novel, and the reader senses that this solution will heal previously opened wounds.

Page 306: Plácida "regateó con el carpintero de Nazaret lo que le cobraba por la hechura del cajón, y lo roció de improperios porque juzgó caro el precio." This very obvious association with Christ the carpenter places Plácida in an extremely bad light, as if she were openly defying God Himself by her actions.

Page 324: Similar to Dives' plea to Abraham that he warn the people on earth to lead a good life (Luke 16: 27-28), is Epifanio's plea to make contact with his sons and daughters from beyond the grave. But the difference is that Dives' entreaty is not motivated by a desire to relieve himself of his torments, whereas Epifanio laments that "por su causa estoy padeciendo tormentas sin cuento." In any case, his efforts are equally fruitless. He is also unable to do anything for Plácida: "Dile, además, que no sea cruel; que con sus crueldades agrava mis tormentos; que para nada le sirven, y al contrario, están apuntándoselas en su cuenta, que a la hora de la hora resulta terrible y muy estricta (325)." Plácida does not repent in the fullest sense of the word, and would probably not respond to her father's words even if she did hear them. This is also Abraham's final conclusion in the Bible: "But he said to him, 'If they do not hearken to Moses and the Prophets, they will not believe even if someone rises from the dead (Luke 16: 31).'"

Page 351: The authorial commentary following Plácida's desperate invocation to have Matiana admit her to her house as her servant is a final condemnation of this woman who has been roundly criticized in page after page: "Eran palabras rotas a largas pausas de llanto y rechinidos de dientes." This parallels Matt. 8: 11-12, after Christ praises the centurion for his great faith:

> And I tell you that many will come from the east and from the west, and will feast with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, but the children of the kingdom will be put forth into the darkness outside; there will be the weeping, and the gnashing of teeth.

Plácida is one of the children of Epifanio's kingdom who will always remain on the outside of the mainstream of life in the region, utterly defeated and without hope.

NOTES

[1]José Luis Martínez, "Creación y recreación de Agustín Yáñez," El Libro y el Pueblo, Nos. 21, 22, 23 (October-November-December, 1966), p. 61.

[2]All Biblical passages quoted are taken from the Holy Trinity Edition previously mentioned, and are identified within the body of the text.

[3]John L. McKenzie, S.J., Dictionary of the Bible (Milwaukee: The Bruce Publishing Company, 1965), p. 922.

[4]McKenzie, p. 937.

[5]Díaz de León, p. 466.

[6]Or, perhaps she adheres to the tenuous theory that Mary of Bethany and Mary Magdalene were the same person.

[7]Díaz de León, p. 468.

[8]Alberto Bonifaz Nuño, "Agustín Yáñez, La creación," La Palabra y el Hombre, No. 14 (April-June, 1960), p. 248.

[9]Jesús Arellano, "Las tierras flacas de Agustín Yáñez," Nivel, No. 3 (March 25, 1963), p. 5.

[10]The Catholic Dictionary, p. 29.

[11]Luke 15: 20.

[12]Lagos, p. 120.

[13]McKenzie, p. 794.

[14]Job 21: 13.

[15]Yáñez, Archipiélago de mujeres (Mexico: Ediciones de la Universidad Nacional Autónoma, 1943), p. 46.

[16]McKenzie, p. 165.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

In an attempt to create an over-all perspective for the points discussed in this dissertation, I would like to make general comments on each novel independent of the other.

The atmosphere of Al filo del agua and the villagers' attitudes toward religion are certainly extreme by any modern standards. Nevertheless, the novel is capable of striking a very responsive chord in almost any Catholic educated exclusively in Catholic schools before the advent of the vernacular in liturgical ceremonies. He or she is likely to feel momentary nostalgia upon reading a Latin phrase in the novel, and can almost smell the mustiness of the retreat house or the incense of Benediction. This is because the sensual, exterior aspect of Church liturgy permeates the work, and because Yáñez, for the most part, uses familiar liturgical elements in the text. Thus the average Catholic feels at home and can truly identify to some degree with the novel's characters. This realization is profoundly frightening, because at the same time it is evident that this atmosphere is very unhealthy.

The importance attributed to form in the liturgy, as well as the concept of the liturgy as a symbol of the traditional past,

have been discussed in detail with respect to Al filo del agua. Among other things, the necessity felt to adhere to tradition and form in the liturgy produces intense mental anguish in many of the novel's characters. Since for them this world can be nothing more than a valley of tears, there can be no respite from this anguish. With almost total emphasis on the sorrowful and fearsome aspects of religion, the various facets of Catholicism become as so many pinpricks that wear down the individual. On the one hand, he or she must abide by a severe, almost inflexible moral code; on the other hand, one is helpless to succeed in this endeavor without the constant intercession of God, the Blessed Mother, and the saints. The uncertainty produced is agonizing in light of the ever-present image of everlasting fire. Life in the village is thus reduced to a perpetual, excruciating examination of conscience.

The Biblical elements of the novel are included as accidental characteristics of Catholicism, and are not responsible for the essence of the village atmosphere. For example, name symbolism serves basically to characterize certain individuals, and the prophetic element in the novel also has an external aura about it--in fact, it is basically a literary device used for the purpose of reader preparation. In general, then, the Biblical references in Al filo del agua should mainly be discussed in terms of Yáñez' writing technique.

While reading Las tierras flacas, the aforementioned Catholic does not necessarily feel familiar with the atmosphere of the

Tierra Santa, nor does he or she receive as many penetrating insights unnoticed by other readers. In this case, the liturgical aspect of the atmosphere, established gradually, is superimposed upon a Biblical atmosphere which, in turn, has its parallel on the secular level.

The Tierra Santa region has no priest or chapel; nevertheless, as already shown, certain liturgical elements are conspicuous by their absence. The fact that the Mass and certain other rituals such as Lenten processions are not to be found does not mean they cease to be important. Rather, several references point to the people's need for concrete representations of their religion, and emphasize that these things are denied them. One extreme example is the description of nature reflecting the various stages and colors of Holy Week liturgical ceremonies.

Religious elements often overlap on the secular plane. The pastoral plays based on religious themes do not transcend the level of secular entertainment. The Devil, more than just an intellectual concept, has his solid, visible counterpart in the airplane that flies overhead. Baptism is equated with inheritance. Saints are thought of in religious as well as practical terms. Prayers often become so spontaneous and sincere that they blend in unnoticed with everyday conversation. But at the same time prayer maintains its importance at the religious level, particularly when juxtaposed with progress, the supposed antithesis of religion. In general, the people never lose sight of the sacred aspects of the religious

elements they secularize. Perhaps this is one more reason why the Catholic reader does not hold the superstitious nature of the people against them.

The essential Old Testament atmosphere of the novel is necessary to its purpose of contrasting the traditional ways of the region with new progressive ideas, in a way that indirectly reflects the religious side of the Jaliscan character. Because the Biblical elements are so numerous, even more so if one considers the regional proverbs as a Biblical element, the direction of the work depends entirely on this atmosphere. Even if the prophetic essence, for instance, of certain names and characters were removed, the situation would be significantly different because the inevitability of the final result would not be as evident. Some of the name symbolism, and many of the novel's explicit and implicit Biblical references, are accidental characteristics; but if the whole of any of the general categories discussed in Chapter IV were omitted, the end would be viewed from a somewhat different perspective.

In conclusion, Catholicism and the Bible are significant considerations in the evaluation of both Al filo del agua and Las tierras flacas. Due principally to the point in time of its appearance, its style and its penetrating psychological characterization, critics in general have judged Al filo del agua to be superior. However, with respect to the effectiveness of the author's use of religion and the Bible as literary tools, both novels are masterfully conceived and have equal literary value.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Aguilera Malta, Demetrio. "Agustín Yáñez, Las tierras flacas." Revista Iberoamericana, 29, No. 155 (January-June, 1963), 191-93.

Alarcón, Pedro Antonio de. El final de Norma, from Obras Completas. Madrid: Ediciones FAX, 1968, pp. 374-440.

Alegría, Fernando. Historia de la novela hispanoamericana, 2nd ed. Mexico: Ediciones de Andrea Edison, 1965.

Altolaguirre, Manuel. "Sobre Al filo del agua." Nivel, 13 (January 25, 1964), 3-4.

Arellano, Jesús. "Las tierras flacas de Agustín Yáñez." Nivel, 3 (March 25, 1963), 5.

Benítez, Fernando. "Yáñez visto por Fernando Benítez." Revista Mexicana de Cultura, 15 (October 11, 1964), 5.

Bonifaz Nuño, Alberto. "Agustín Yáñez, La creación." La Palabra y el Hombre, 14 (April-June, 1960), 247-49.

_____. "Al filo del agua, novela intemporal." Boletín Bibliográfico Mexicano (July-August, 1949), 12-13.

Brushwood, John S. Mexico in its Novel: A Nation's Search for Identity. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1966.

_____, and Rojas Garcidueñas, José. Breve historia de la novela mexicana. Mexico: Colección Studium, 9, Ediciones de Andrea, 1959.

Burghardt, Walter J., S. J., and Lynch, William F., S. J. The Idea of Catholicism. Cleveland: Meridian Books, Inc., 1960.

Campos, Julieta. "El barroquismo interior de Yáñez." La Imagen en el Espejo. Mexico: Universidad Nacional Autónoma, 1965, pp. 159-65.

Carballo, Emmanuel. Agustín Yáñez. Havana: Casa de las Américas, 1966.

_____. "Agustín Yáñez." Anales de la Universidad de Chile, 124, No. 138 (April-June, 1966), 28-77.

_____. "Conversaciones con Agustín Yáñez." Siempre, 37, No. 488 (October 31, 1962), 1-4.

_____. Diecinueve protagonistas de la literatura mexicana del siglo XX. Mexico: Empresas Editoriales, 1965.

_____. "Entre libros: Agustín Yáñez." Nivel, 13 (January 25, 1964), 3.

_____. "La novela." Siempre, 46, No. 497 (January 2, 1963), 1-2.

_____. "Prólogo," Al filo del agua. Havana: Casa de las Américas, 1967, pp. vii-xxii.

Cardiel Reyes, Raúl. "El ser de América en Agustín Yáñez." Filosofía y letras, 19, No. 38 (April-June, 1950), 301-21.

Cardona Lynch, Armando. "Años, caminos y mujeres." Tiras de colores, 2, No. 27 (July, 1944), 14-15.

Carmona Nenclares, F. "Novela mexicana contemporánea (El espíritu de las letras en Agustín Yáñez)." Revista de las Indias, 34, No. 108 (March-April, 1949), 293-97.

Carter, Boyd G. "The Mexican Novel at Mid-Century." Prairie Schooner, 28, No. 2 (1954), 143-56.

Castellanos, Rosario. "La novela mexicana y su valor testimonial." Hispania, 47, No. 2 (May, 1964), 223-30.

Castro Leal, Antonio. "Contestación." Memoria de el Colegio Nacional, 7, No. 7 (1952), 257-64.

_____. "Prólogo," Al filo del agua, 9th ed. Mexico: Editorial Porrúa, 1969, pp. vii-xii.

Connolly, Eileen M. "La centralidad del protagonista en Al filo del agua." Revista Iberoamericana, 32, No. 62 (July-December, 1966), 275-80.

Crow, John A. "A Critical Appraisal of the Contemporary Spanish-American Novel." Hispania, 34 (May, 1951), 155-64.

_____. "Dos grandes estilistas mexicanos." Humanismo, 3, No. 30 (April-June, 1955), 160-73.

Chávarri, Raúl. "La novela moderna mejicana." Cuadernos Hispanoamericanos, 58, No. 173 (May, 1964), 367-79.

_____. "Nuevo combate del hombre por la tierra," review of La tierra pródiga. Cuadernos Hispanoamericanos, 64, No. 190 (October, 1965), 196-202.

Chumacero, Alí. "Un escritor habla de política." Ovaciones, Supl. no. 41 (October 7, 1962), 5.

Díaz de León, Martha. "Los personajes en la estructura de Al filo del agua." La Palabra y el Hombre, 43 (July-September, 1967), 457-73.

Dos Passos, John. Manhattan Transfer. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1926.

Durán, Manuel. "Cuatro novelas mexicanas." Revista hispánica moderna, 26 (July-October, 1960), 143-45.

Fernández, Sergio. "Sobre 'Las tierras flacas.'" Nivel, 13 (January 25, 1964), 8.

Flasher, John. Contemporary Mexico in the Novels of Agustín Yáñez: An Interpretative Analysis. Diss. Rutgers, 1968.

Gamiochipi de Liguori, Gloria. Yáñez y la realidad mexicana. Mexico: Universidad Nacional Autónoma, 1970.

Gómez-Gil, Orlando. Historia Crítica de la Literatura Hispanoamericana. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1968.

Gómez Robleda, Antonio. "Agustín Yáñez, escritor y estadista." Nivel, 13 (January 25, 1964), 4.

González, Manuel Pedro. "Agustín Yáñez y su última novela." Casa de las Américas, 2, Nos. 11-12 (March-June, 1962), 43-46.

_____. "Luis Spota, gran novelista en potencia." Revista hispánica moderna, 26 (January-April, 1960), 102-106.

González Casanova, Henrique. "Agustín Yáñez: La tierra pródiga." Revista Iberoamericana, 28, No. 54 (July-December, 1962), 387-90.

_____. "La novela." Siempre, 452 (February 21, 1962), 5-6.

Goodwin, O. C. "The Church, the Clergy and the Bible in 'Don Quixote of la Mancha.'" Unpubl. M. A. thesis. Gainesville: University of Florida, 1955.

Haddad, Elaine. "The Structure of Al filo del agua." Hispania, 47, No. 2 (May, 1964), 522-29.

Henestrosa, Andrés. "Agustín Yáñez, narrador de ciudades." Tiras de colores, 2, No. 27 (July, 1944), 10.

Herring, Hubert. A History of Latin America from the Beginnings to the Present, 2nd ed. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1965.

The Holy Bible, Holy Trinity Edition. Chicago: The Catholic Press, 1951.

Humphrey, Robert. Stream of Consciousness in the Modern Novel. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1965.

Jibaja, Eduardo. "Yáñez no traicionará a las letras." Humanismo, 4 (October, 1952), 82-85.

Joyce, James. Ulysses. New York: Modern Library, 1961.

Lagos B., Ramona. "Tentación y penitencia en Al filo del agua de Agustín Yáñez." Atenea, 45, No. 166, 105-21.

Lago, Raimundo. "Agustín Yáñez, maestro de la narración imaginativa hispanoamericana." Revista de Bellas Artes, 17 (1967).

Langford, Walter M. The Mexican Novel Comes of Age. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1971.

"Libertad y compromiso en literatura," an interview with Agustín Yáñez. Universidad de México, 3, No. 34 (October, 1949).

Lytton, Edward George Earle Lytton Bulwer Lytton, 1st baron. The Last Days of Pompeii, 2 vols. Boston: Estes and Lauriat, 1891.

Llamas Jiménez, María del Refugio. Trilogía de personajes femeninos en "Al filo del agua." Mexico: Editorial Porrúa, 1971.

McKenzie, John L., S. J. Dictionary of the Bible. Milwaukee: The Bruce Publishing Company, 1965.

Magdaleno, Mauricio. "Lo más perdurable de las realidades." Tiras de colores, 2, No. 27 (July, 1944), 7-8.

_____. "Sobre Archipiélago de mujeres." Nivel, 13 (January 25, 1964), pp. 9, 11, 12.

Maillefert, Alfred. "De Espejismo de Juchitán." Tiras de colores, 2, No. 27 (July, 1944), 8.

Martínez, José Luis. "Creación y recreación de Agustín Yáñez." El Libro y el Pueblo, Nos. 21, 22, 23 (October-November, December, 1966), 56-61.

_____. "Crónica de la novela: siete novelas mexicanas de hoy." Cuadernos Americanos (July-August, 1947), 269-70.

Martínez Ruiz, José ("Azorín"). "Vida de un labrantín." España, 3rd ed. Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1967.

Menéndez Plancarte, Gabriel. "Yáñez el silencioso." Tiras de colores, 2, No. 27 (July, 1944), 2.

Menton, Seymour. "Asturias, Carpentier y Yáñez: paralelismos y divergencias." Revista Iberoamericana, 35, No. 67 (January-April, 1969), 31-52.

Millán, María del Carmen. "Archipiélago de mujeres." Rueca, 2, No. 6 (1943), 56-59.

_____. "Reseña a Flor de juegos antiguos." Rueca, 1, No. 3 (1942), 42-43.

Monroy, Juan Antonio. La Biblia en el "Quijote." Madrid: Editorial V. Suárez, 1963.

Morton, F. Rand. "'Al filo del agua,' novela de dimensión universal." Nivel, 13 (January 25, 1964), pp. 8, 10.

Mueller, William Randolph. The Prophetic Voice in Modern Fiction. New York: Association Press, 1959.

O'Neill, Samuel J. "Interior Monologue in Al filo del agua." Hispania, 51, No. 3 (September, 1968), 447-56.

Palacios, Emmanuel. "Yáñez, animador de una generación." Tiras de colores, 2, No. 27 (July, 1944), 5-6.

Peñalosa, Javier. "Agustín Yáñez y el lenguaje del Bajío." Nivel, 8 (August 25, 1963), 4.

Portuondo, José Antonio. "Al filo del agua." Cuadernos Americanos, 37 (January-February, 1948), 284-87.

Ramos, Samuel. "Religion and the Mexican Mind." Odyssey Review, 2, No. 2, 110-21.

Rangel Guerra, Alfonso. Agustín Yáñez: un mexicano y su obra. Mexico: Empresas Editoriales, 1969.

Rojas Garcidueñas, José. "El mexicanismo y nuestra literatura." Anales del Instituto de Investigaciones Estéticas, 5, No. 20 (1952), 69-80.

Sánchez, Porfirio. "Eros y Thanatos en Al filo del agua." Cuadernos Americanos, 163, No. 2 (March-April, 1969), 252-62.

Schade, George D. "Augury in Al filo del agua." Texas Studies in Literature and Language, 2, No. 1 (Spring, 1960), 78-87.

Selva, Mauricio de la. "Reseña a Las tierras flacas." Cuadernos Americanos, 127, No. 2 (March-April, 1963), 246-49.

_____. "Tres novelistas de nuestra América." Cuadernos Americanos, 114 (1961), 283-95.

Sienkiewicz, Henryk. Quo Vadis. Trans. Jeremiah Curtin. New York: Dodd, Mead, 1955.

Sims, James H. The Bible in Milton's Epics. Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1962.

Sommers, Joseph. After the Storm. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1968.

_____. "Novels of a Dead Revolution." The Nation, 197, No. 6 (September 7, 1963), 114-15.

_____. "Las tierras flacas." Books Abroad, 37, No. 4 (Autumn, 1963), 434-35.

Sotelo Inclán, Jesús. "Maestría de Agustín Yáñez." Tiras de colores, 2, No. 27 (July, 1944), 19-20.

Soto Alvarez, Clemente. "Homenaje a Agustín Yáñez." Tiras de colores, 2, No. 27 (July, 1944), 1-2.

Stephenson, Mary E. The Treatment of Religion in Contemporary Spanish-American Fiction. Diss. Chicago, 1951.

Stowe, Harriet Elizabeth (Beecher). Uncle Tom's Cabin. New York: Dodd, Mead, 1952.

Sylvester, Harry. "Revolution's Village." The New York Times Book Review, August 11, 1963, p. 4.

Toral Moreno, Alfonso. "Reflexiones en torno a La creación de Agustín Yáñez." Et Caetera, 7 (January-March, 1961), 46-54.

Torres Bodet, Jaime. "La obra novelística de Agustín Yáñez." Nivel, 13 (January 25, 1964), pp. 1, 2, 8.

Unamuno, Miguel de. San Manuel Bueno, mártir from Dos novelas cortas, ed. James R. Stamm and Herbert E. Isar. Waltham: Blaisdell, 1961.

Valdés, Carlos. "La creación." Universidad de México, 14, No. 5 (January, 1960), 38.

Valdés, Octaviano. "Estampas e historias." Tiras de colores, 2, No. 27 (July, 1944), 11.

_____. "Las tierras flacas." Nivel, 3 (March 25, 1963), pp. 5, 10.

Van Conant, Linda M. Agustín Yáñez: Intérprete de la novela mexicana moderna. Mexico: Editorial Porrúa, 1969.

Vázquez-Amaral, José. "La novelística de Agustín Yáñez, II." Cuadernos Americanos, 138, No. 1 (January-February, 1965), 218-39.

_____. "Técnica novelística de Agustín Yáñez." Cuadernos Americanos, 98, No. 2 (March-April, 1958), 245-51.

Yáñez, Agustín. Al filo del agua, 9th ed. Mexico: Editorial Porrúa, 1969.

_____. Archipiélago de mujeres. Mexico: Ediciones de la Universidad Nacional Autónoma, 1943.

_____. "Cómo escribí La tierra pródiga." Siempre, 452 (February 21, 1962), 5.

_____. La creación, 2nd ed. Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1959.

_____. Días de Bali. Mexico, 1964.

_____. Discursos por Jalisco. Mexico: Editorial Porrúa, 1958.

_____. Don Justo Sierra: su vida, sus ideas y sus obras. Mexico: Universidad Nacional Autónoma, 1950.

_____. The Edge of the Storm. Trans. Ethel Brinton. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1963.

_____. "La escuela y la vocación." Tiras de colores, 2, No. 27 (July, 1944), 2-3.

_____. Espejismo de Juchitán. Mexico: Imprenta Universitaria, 1940.

_____. Esta es mala suerte. Mexico: B. Costa-Amic, 1945.

_____. Flor de juegos antiguos, 5th ed. Mexico: Organización Editorial Novaro, 1967.

_____. "La fortuna de los Ibarra Diéguez." Cuadernos Americanos, 149, No. 6 (November-December, 1966), 232-42.

_____. Fray Bartolomé de las Casas, el Conquistador Conquistado. Mexico: Ediciones Xóchitl, 1949.

_____. Genio y figuras de Guadalajara. Mexico: Abside, 1942.

_____. "Fray Bartolomé de las Casas, Varón Volcánico." Tiras de colores, 2, No. 27 (July, 1944), 15-17.

_____. "Humanismo y filosofía." Tiras de colores, 2, No. 27 (July, 1944), 15-17.

_____. The Lean Lands. Trans. Ethel Brinton. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1968.

_____. Melibea, Isolda y Alda en tierras cálidas. Buenos Aires: Espasa-Calpe, 1946.

_____. Ojerosa y pintada, 2nd ed. Mexico: Editorial Joaquín Mortiz, 1967.

_____. "¿Para qué sirve la literatura?" El Libro y el Pueblo, 3, Nos. 7-8 (January-June, 1961), 15-29.

_____. Pasión y convalecencia. Mexico: Abside, 1943.

_____. "La provincia y la cultura." Tiras de colores, 2, No. 27 (July, 1944), 4.

_____. Los sentidos al aire. Mexico: Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes, 1964.

_____. La tierra pródiga, 3rd ed. Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1966.

_____. Las tierras flacas. Mexico: Editorial Joaquín Mortiz, 1962.

_____. Tres cuentos. Mexico: Editorial Joaquín Mortiz, 1964.

_____. Yahualica. Mexico: Etopeya, 1946.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Donald William Davey was born in Omaha, Nebraska on November 23, 1944. He grew up in Glen Ellyn, Illinois and graduated cum laude with a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Notre Dame on June 5, 1966.

Under a National Defense Education Act Title IV Fellowship, Mr. Davey initiated his graduate studies at the University of Florida in September, 1966. While continuing his studies, he was an Interim Instructor from September, 1969 to August, 1970.

Mr. Davey married the former María Esperanza Cristancho in Cúcuta, Colombia on September 14, 1968. They have one child, Richard, born on October 20, 1972. Mr. Davey is currently on the Spanish faculty at the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater, a position he has held since September, 1970.

I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Irving R. Wershow, Chairman
Professor of Spanish

I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Alfred Hower
Professor of Spanish and
Portuguese

I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

John J. Allen
Professor of Spanish

This dissertation was submitted to the Department of Romance Languages and Literatures in the College of Arts and Sciences and to the Graduate Council, and was accepted as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Dean, Graduate School

June, 1974

UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA
3 1262 08667 039 4